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## **Teanga & Tikanga:**

# **A Comparative Study of National Broadcasting in a Minority Language on Māori Television and Teilifís na Gaeilge**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Film,  
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## ABSTRACT

Teilifís na Gaeilge (TG4) and Māori Television are unique amongst minority language television broadcasters in their position as national indigenous channels. Since their launch (TG4 in 1996 and Māori Television in 2004), after decades of campaigns, there has been a blossoming of the image of the minoritised language for both speakers and non-speakers. Relationships between state ideology and the national indigenous language have led to a situation where a minority language television service broadcasts to the entire nation. Two strands are considered here: how the indigenous language interacts with television, resulting in change for both, and how relationships between a linguistic minority and the national majority may be developed and re-imagined via an indigenous national television broadcaster. This study focuses specifically on language use on screen and on set, and the effect these practices have on the image of the language, including how minority language television may speak to non-fluent people who nonetheless feel an affinity with the language and its culture, and who wish to be 'refamiliarised' or reconnected with it.

Combining interviews, observation and analysis, as well as considering the political and cultural context of TG4 and Māori Television, this comparative study contributes to the opening up of a new area for Minority Language Media (MLM) research, namely the area of National Indigenous Minority Language Media. The history of language shift in Ireland and New Zealand helps to explain the unusual relationship many people (particularly non-fluent speakers) have with their minoritised indigenous language today. Outlining the development of indigenous national language television in Ireland and New Zealand, and investigating how the challenges posed by using a minority language in national broadcasting are tackled by Māori Television and TG4, this thesis explores the position of the indigenous national language broadcaster in a public service mould. Obligated to 'talk out' to the nation, whilst also 'talking in' to fluent-speaking communities, both television services have engaged creatively with issues of representation. Their inventive 'twisting' of conventional genres and production practices show the effects on television of an alternative language and different cultural norms.

Māori Television and TG4 demonstrate that a minority language broadcaster does not have to appeal solely to minority language speakers. The success of the stations in attracting people from 'outside' indicates their international scope, and can serve as a model for the work, possibilities and challenges facing other minority language media outlets in a contemporary context. The inventive ways by which the more traditional elements of language and culture are translated to the television medium also show the many possibilities when the indigenous language is given a space in which to breathe and live according to its own creative potential.

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## PREFACE

I think about language every day. I translate and interpret what I see and hear and think. I imagine alternatives. I learn new words and phrases. I feel for correspondences. Language is an ever-changing art and a process that every single speaker contributes to on a daily basis. Languages are never transparent, and there are different types of mediation in the way a language passes from one person to another. The initial type of mediation is from thought to expression – as a speaker uses language to express thoughts, and thoughts can be altered or shaped by the way words work together in a given language. Another type of mediation is from language to language, or translation. A further important type of mediation is between originator of the utterance and the receiver, such as in writing and broadcasting. There are so many ways in which to read and listen. We see what we can say. I believe that we imagine beyond words, but that words shape the ways in which we may convey our dreams and wishes to other people. Although there is always something lost, the use of different languages can enable a greater degree of creative communication.

I believe that linguistic diversity is important, and similarly that national broadcasting should reflect and speak to the ‘founding groups’ of the imagined nation, as well as to the actual demographics in the country (400 different ethnic groups in New Zealand, 160 in Ireland). The use of television as a medium for language revival or indeed for language portrayal is fascinating to me. My cultural identity is intrinsic to my research. I have an affinity with the Irish culture as it is my own heritage, and with the Māori culture, where I have been made to feel so welcome. I want to celebrate the ways in which these lesser-used but nationally-recognised languages can describe the world, and help to imagine a different sort of television to the kind hitherto experienced in their respective countries.

I am not a neutral researcher. I have worked in Irish-language television and short film, and am in favour of indigenous languages developing through broadcasting and the audio-visual media in general. I have been learning te reo Māori and tikanga Māori [Māori language and culture] over the past three years, and have respect for the reclamation and rebuilding of cultural and linguistic identity in Aotearoa New Zealand. I strongly believe that indigenous languages and their associated cultures are important to humanity in general, but particularly to the peoples from whom they come. In an era where global (often anglo-american) media and other products abound, I consider it essential to a sense of identity and diversity that older languages should persist and evolve.

Despite my cultural sympathies and experience working in the industry, I am not really an insider in either context. I first arrived in New Zealand in June 2005, and have been learning as much as possible about the cultural and historical context ever since. My experience here is that of an interested and sensitive outsider or visitor. In Ireland, I come from an English-speaking family, but with a strong tradition of nationalism and associated respect for the Irish language and traditions. I learned Irish. I am a natural speaker of Irish, not a native speaker. I lack the kinship and community context, and have books and songs as my virtual whakapapa [genealogy]. The oral

tradition has come to me through print and CD recordings as well as through the traditional means. As Sadler (2007) has noted, this may be an inevitable feature of intergenerational transmission in contemporary times.

English is a problematic medium because it often appears to be inevitable. However, for people who have a different first language, it is never an unquestioned given, as anglophone monolinguals sometimes seem to believe. The thesis is told through this third language, which acts sometimes as a bridge, sometimes as a divider, and sometimes as a negator of the two original languages. Something is lost by this translation. I cannot access the deep heart of the Māori situation, nor do I pretend to. It is difficult to imagine, however, a form of communication by which Irish language and Māori language television might meet each other that does not require English as a lingua franca. In a way, it is useful to have a third term (although it is not neutral, being the coloniser's language in both cases), as to write this thesis in Irish would marginalise Māori and to write it in Māori is beyond my capabilities. With English, some distance is achieved. On the other hand, producing work *about* a language rather than *in* a language is perhaps to admit the greater linguistic politics which silence the 'subject'. To use English is to admit its power. The colonial traces have left us with nuances and a particular way of seeing and being. And yet, I use English with an awareness of its limitations. When I use words and phrases from the other languages, it is to show that English is not universal. It must make room for these other concepts, for things that it can never fully express. This thesis, although written in English, contains pieces in Irish and te reo Māori, mostly drawn from the words of the people I interviewed during the course of the project. To honour their expression, and to indicate the role these languages play in the content and in the texture of this thesis, I quote directly, and follow with a translation into English for readers who are not conversant with te reo Māori or Irish. Following the Māori writer Patricia Grace, I do not use a visually different font or typeface to indicate the use of different languages<sup>1</sup>.

I value language, culture and song as a means of understanding other people and of finding a meaning in life itself. I am more concerned with visions and ideals, and how these persist and adapt in the face of obstacles, than with institutional policy per se. The people who campaigned for and who established Māori Television and Teilifís na Gaeilge are people who see alternatives. They see space to play with between laws and existing practices. They find a new way to encourage old values. The most important thing for me is people, and the most important thing about people is their spirit. So this project privileges the spirit and the ideal, and examines their manifestation in broadcasting and working practices.

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<sup>1</sup> "I do not italicise because the words are not 'foreign' to me or my characters and are indigenous to my country" (Grace, 1999: 72).

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## GLOSSARY

te ao Māori	the Māori world
amhrán	song
Aotearoa	New Zealand
ATN	Aotearoa Television Network
BAI	Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
BCI	Broadcasting Commission of Ireland, now known as the BAI
comhairleoir teanga	language consultant
Éire	Ireland
Foras na Gaeilge	Irish language board
an Ghaeilge	the Irish language
Gaeilgeoir	Irish-speaker (sometimes pejorative)
gaelscoil	school where the teaching medium is Irish
Gaeltacht	official Irish-speaking area (descriptive)
hau	breath (of life)
hui	deliberative meeting, forum for discussion, meeting/ gathering
ILBF	Irish Language Broadcast Fund
iwi	tribe
kai	food
kaiārahi reo/ kaitiaki reo	language consultant
kāinga	home place
kaitiaki/ kai urungi	(spiritual) guardian/ guide
kaitiakitanga	(spiritual) guardianship
karakia	prayer, blessing
kaumātua	members of the elder generation
kaupapa Māori	Māori ideology - a philosophical doctrine, incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society
kōhanga reo	Māori immersion pre-schools
kura kaupapa	Māori language and culture primary schools
mana	prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma
manaakitanga	hospitality, generosity – a key value
marae	meeting house
mauri	life force
NIFTC	Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission
NZFC	New Zealand Film Commission
NZoA	New Zealand on Air
Pākehā	white New Zealanders whose ancestors were colonists
pepeha	introduction, explaining where the speaker is from and making links to the listeners
pōwhiri	ceremonial greeting
pūkana	facial expressions of wairua being released
te reo Māori	the Māori language
RnaG	Raidió na Gaeltachta    Gaeltacht Radio
RTÉ	Raidió Teilifís Éireann    first national broadcaster
seanfhocal	proverb
Taoiseach	head of Irish government
taonga	treasure – can be physical or spiritual
tauiwi	people from places outside Aotearoa New Zealand
Te Kaunihera Kaumātua	cultural advisory panel for Māori Television

Te Kaiwhakapūmau i Te Reo Incorporated	[those who make the language secure] Wellington Māori Language Board
Ngā Aho Whakaari	industry group representing Māori screen workers
Te Pūtahi Pāho	Māori Electoral College.
Te Rautaki Reo Māori	the (national) Māori Language Strategy
Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori	/Māori Language Commission
TG4	Teilifís na Gaeilge/ Irish Language Television
tikanga Māori	Māori customs, beliefs and ways of doing things.
TKoM	Te Kāhui o Māhutonga [constellation of the Southern Cross] (a group formed to review the 2003 establishment Act)
TMP	Te Māngai Pāho/The Maori Broadcasting Commission
TPK	Te Puni Kōkiri/ The Ministry of Māori Development
TVNZ	Television New Zealand
Údarás na Gaeltachta	Gaeltacht Development Authority
waiata	song
wairua	meanma/ spirit
whaikōrero	oratory
whakapapa	layers, strata, often used to refer to genealogical links and interconnections
whakataukī	proverb
whānau	family
whānaungatanga	interrelationships
WITBC	World Indigenous Television Broadcasters' Conference
WITBN	World Indigenous Television Broadcasters' Network

## INTRODUCTION

Developments in minority language television over the past twenty years have sparked a growing field of academic study. In parallel, the increase in indigenous broadcasting initiatives is also receiving more critical attention. The growth of such new uses of media has been partly due to advances in digital technology, but also to a shift in ideology in the states in which such broadcasters operate. Ireland and New Zealand are host to a fascinating combination, where an indigenous minority language with official status is broadcast to the entire nation. *Teilifís na Gaeilge* (TG4) and Māori Television are unique amongst minority language television broadcasters in their position as national indigenous channels.

Spoken fluently by a minority of people in their respective countries, Irish and *te reo Māori* [the Māori language]<sup>1</sup> nonetheless have significant symbolic presence as markers of national and/or community identity. Both languages have official national status and are supported by the state to greater or lesser degrees of effectiveness. The launch of *Teilifís na Gaeilge* (now TG4) in 1996 and Māori Television in 2004, after decades of campaigns, has led to a blossoming of the image of the language in new domains for both speakers and non-speakers.

This thesis will examine several relationships. How do ideological and political factors combine to make a state establish a national minority language television broadcaster? How is a minority national indigenous language affected by television, and how is its image affected by this medium? How are the conventions and apparatus of television affected by the minority indigenous national language and cultural norms? In order to investigate these questions, I take a broad view of TG4 and Māori Television, including contributions from the independent production environment. Elin Haf Gruffyd Jones underlines the link between production practice and televisual image, stating, “The conditions under which these media identities operate – levels of funding, structure of the industry, commissioning processes etc. - are crucial elements in the construction of the image of the community on screen” (Gruffyd Jones, 2007: 209). Indeed, for both stations, the community is central to their sense of purpose. In both Ireland and New Zealand, however, the minority language television station is often presumed to more or less represent ‘its’ people. This is a reductionist and problematic approach. I propose to look at the stations on their own terms, as incomplete manifestations of a greater cultural and linguistic reservoir. They are the starting points, the visible tip of the iceberg for many citizens of their respective countries. Even if they cannot fully represent their communities, they can – and do – offer a means of introducing alternative perspectives and practices into the majoritarian broadcasting culture.

## 1 Critical context

Many are concerned with preserving language as a carrier of culture, or as the manifestation of diversity in human thinking. Others have written about the obligation a post-colonial state has in terms of making reparation for past humanitarian as well as linguistic wrongs (Blake, 2003; May, 2001). Often a distinction is made between official recognition of a language and actual use of that language. The issues of symbolism, identity and the coherence of a people within (or in spite of) a state are central to the debate so far. Scholars have claimed that indigenous groups have a greater right to support for the expression of their culture and language in the media than other minority groups (Browne, 1996: 5-6; Kymlicka & Patten, 2003; May, 2001). This judgement is based on recognition of the debt the majority culture owe the indigenous in terms of identity and on the need for the majority to atone for colonial injustice, the effects of which persist to the present day. It also draws on the prior sovereignty of the indigenous people in that place, implying a 'right' to media, amongst other things. This 'right' is strongly linked to the idea of alterity or resistance, in that indigenous media are assumed to work counter to the dominant culture of the mass media (Molnar & Meadows, 2001: xi).

To these concerns I would like to add the notion of the image of a language. Quite apart from its symbolic power, each language provides a particular set of metaphors with which its speakers think about their environment (Ó Laoire, 2005). It also has an external image – how it is perceived by its speakers, and by those who do not speak it. Television affects both these aspects of the image of a language, by making it more visible and by accelerating language change (in most cases, standardisation or hybridisation<sup>2</sup>). I examine how Māori Television and TG4 present the indigenous language to appeal to a broad national audience whilst trying not to alienate their fluent-speaking viewers. The challenge of reaching a disparate audience (disparate in terms of age, sex, class, geographical location, as well as in linguistic ability and attitude to language) is common to other minority broadcasters, but in the case of Ireland and New Zealand, it is also implicated with issues of national identity and public service broadcasting.

Helen Molnar and Michael Meadows (2001) and Donald Browne (1996, 2005) have carried out significant research about indigenous minority television and radio, often but not exclusively dealing with media which broadcast in indigenous languages. Browne takes a global overview, including Māori and Irish language radio in a study which spans three continents, but does not cover the indigenous minority television services in New Zealand and Ireland, which at the time of his research were only beginning. Molnar and Meadows focus on the community impact of developments in Aboriginal broadcasting in Australia, Canada and the Pacific (2001). In both cases, the authors look at politics, economics and social and community response. They do not address the issues of language use in depth, although Browne has given the matter some attention. In her

contribution to Cormack and Hourigan's 2007 book *Minority Language Media*, Eithne O'Connell also claims that

No serious effort to develop minority language media studies as a discipline in its own right, complementing media studies on the one hand and minority language studies on the other, can make significant headway unless it takes a long, detailed look at the specifically linguistic elements of minority language media studies. (O'Connell, 2007: 227)

For this reason, throughout this study I focus specifically on language use on set and on screen and the effect these practices have on the image of the language.

Recent scholarly writing on minority languages and the medium of television derives mostly from Mike Cormack. Cormack developed the idea of 'Minority Language Media Studies' as a separate field of research enquiry, and has written about radio and television in western Europe, particularly in Scotland, in relation to minority language (2000, 2005, 2007). Characterising the field of Minority Language Media [MLM] as a meeting place for linguistics, sociology, geopolitical, cultural and media studies, he writes about matters of identity within a nation, and the importance of the media in contributing to language development. In a 2007 book co-edited with Niamh Hourigan (whose earlier work concerned social movements and campaigns for television services in Catalan, Basque, Irish and Welsh contexts (Hourigan, 2003)), Cormack gathers essays from primarily European scholars, who focus on issues such as relations between MLM and the public sphere, language maintenance, national representation, translation and campaigns to establish minority language television services (Cormack & Hourigan, 2007). In this otherwise comprehensive and seminal book, however, little attention is paid to the relationship between speakers of a minority language and those who, although they are not fluent, identify with the culture and would like to learn. There is also little on the relationship between the minority and majority, although the role of the state is addressed by some writers. In the interests of retaining the umbrella term 'minority language', which provides a common rallying point for the experiences of many different linguistic situations, the contributors do not explore the implications of indigeneity, although Hourigan points to different power relations and state support in the European context for immigrant or migrant minority languages and native or regional minority languages. There is also a gap in that none of the essays here involve textual analyses of actual programmes broadcast by the minority media outlets under discussion. This is an important element to consider, because the primary purpose of any media outlet is to create and broadcast material to reach its viewership. To assess possible effects on language ability and attitude, it is important to analyse what the viewers see. Whilst knowledge of the background and context of a media outlet are vital to an understanding of what motivates contemporary action, it is the actual material of the television channel which now deserves our further critical attention.

In Ireland, Iarfhlaith Watson has carried out a comprehensive historical and sociological overview of the position of the Irish language in the national broadcast media from the establishment of the

State in 1922 to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century (2003). Whilst this work is an excellent resource for those seeking information as to personalities, policies and politics relating to the media throughout the decades 1920-2000, and also refers to differences between Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht-led campaign strategies and visions of a broadcasting service, it does not include a study of any particular media texts. Another Irish scholar, Tadhg Ó hÍfearnáin, who works in the field of sociolinguistics, wrote a paper (2000) on the relationship between state ideology, audiences and the Irish language broadcast media, but until 2008 no further substantial work was done in this area. In 2008, University College Galway hosted a conference, which I attended, reflecting on the first decade of TG4. Essays in the subsequent book constitute the first collection of critical views about the channel, and are valuable in their scope, covering the campaign to establish TG4, its relation to community and language-learning audiences, as well as to national language policy, and a view of the independent production industry (O'Connell, Walsh & Denvir, 2008). However, there has yet to be much close reading of programmes broadcast on TG4.

In New Zealand, there has been a considerable amount of analysis of the representation of Māori in what is usually called 'mainstream' news media, but there is so far little published research about Māori and media in general, let alone critical academic work on the Māori Television Service itself. However, there are many writers in related fields, who discuss language (Benton, 1997; Karetu, 1997; Reedy, 2000), identity (McIntosh, 2007; Walker, 2004), representation (Reweti, 2006) and self-determination (Bargh, 2007; O'Sullivan, 2006). As regards Māori Television, people have observed audience response (Poihipi, 2007), and spoken of the cultural burden and nation-building role of the station (Smith & Abel, 2008). New Zealand scholars Jo Smith and Sue Abel have begun a study of Māori Television in the context of its relationship to the national polity, and explore issues of indigeneity, nationhood and identity (Smith & Abel, 2008). Such studies are interesting in their recognition of the multiple strands at work in a nationally-funded indigenous minority television service, but do not focus on the language politics inherent in the project. My approach here will be to investigate the vision of the enterprise, and how the people working in the Māori television production sector see their role. Integral to this is the sense of the language as taonga [cultural treasure].

As far as I can ascertain, my comparative research is the first study which attempts to look at national indigenous language television channels from different continents in terms of onscreen language image, broadcasting policy and practice. I hope, therefore, that this work will provide a new perspective on the situation. So far, researchers have mostly looked at structural and statistical matters (particularly in the European context), strongly linking television station's existence to State policy and cultural revival. I would like to couple this with a more textual approach, so that specific programmes may be evaluated as examples of cultural and linguistic production within a creative framework. In her writing on Māori literature in English, Alice Te Punga Somerville points

out that much scholarly work is engaged with talking about texts as opposed to listening to what they have to say (Somerville, 2007: 109). This is also the case in relation to minority language media studies. For this reason, after a consideration of the linguistic, media and national environments of the channels, I will turn to actual texts from Māori Television and TG4, and to try and interpret them on their own terms as much as is possible for an 'outsider' viewer. These texts are not readily accessible to an international audience, and I realise that my perception is necessarily blinkered. Nevertheless, I can speak Irish fluently and have an intermediate level of te reo Māori. I hope that my perspective will be of interest to future, more linguistically competent researchers.

To afford proper respect to the creative efforts of people in the field of production, there is a necessity for critical and analytical treatment of minority language broadcasting as media texts, rather than as a social or cultural phenomenon. Secondly, whilst the possible influence or impact of a minority language media service on the self-esteem and practice of speakers has been explored (and to a certain extent the relationship between such media services and the non-speaking majority who do not identify with the language), there is next to nothing written about how minority language television may speak to non-fluent people who nonetheless feel an affinity with the language and its culture. I hope that this unique view on issues of national indigenous language television may contribute to research on Māori Television and TG4 within their respective mediascapes, as well as in the broader context of international minority language broadcasting.

Indigenous national language television has a complex role to play in supporting language and culture - a role which must take into account the sociolinguistic context of the place in which the station is broadcasting. Both Māori Television and TG4 have the goal of enhancing the status of the indigenous language and associated culture. In New Zealand and Ireland, the indigenous minoritised language appears very different to citizens depending on their own ability/fluency, and on their sense of national and cultural identity. Unlike widely-spoken world languages, te reo Māori and Irish are rarely considered transparent. Whether 'normalised' on screen as a fact of life (carrying the danger of minimising real inequalities and discrepancies between lipservice and community usage), or reified as valuable in itself (which may lead to lacklustre translations of tired cultural material to the screen, as it is assumed that the audience watch for the language and not for the content), a (minority) national indigenous language in the context of a mediascape dominated by a majority language is problematic both for producers and for viewers. A television station broadcasting in this language engages, willingly or not, with ideological issues such as nationality, identity, and belonging.



## Discussion of Terms

In order to examine the context and work of Māori Television and TG4, it is necessary to situate these projects in the larger scheme of postcolonial cultural and linguistic revival, state and public attitudes to the indigenous language, as well as features of television itself. Here I explore the constellations of meaning that surround terms frequently used in the thesis.

### What does ‘indigenous’ mean?

There is no agreed definition of the term ‘indigenous’. Taken as a qualifier for a group of people, it is generally understood to refer to first peoples with continuous presence in a place, surrounded by a majority of other people whose ancestors arrived later. In the implied contrast to this other group of people (the late-comers), the term ‘indigenous’ carries political connotations. The United Nations often uses a definition from the Martínez-Cobo report for the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination of Minorities (1986):

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. (United Nations, 2004: 2)

When used about languages, the term ‘indigenous’ is problematic. For one thing, neither te reo Māori nor Irish are indigenous in the sense of growing up from the land. Although the languages adapted and changed to meet the conditions of the country in the distant past, in both cases their original speakers were migrants. In the case of New Zealand, Māori were the first people to arrive (some centuries ago). In Ireland, other groups inhabited the island before the arrival of the Gaelic civilisation (millennia ago). Thus, the term ‘indigenous’ is used of te reo and Irish mainly in opposition to the language of the colonisers, English. Indeed, it is not often used in Ireland, where *cainteoir dúchais* or ‘native speaker’ is the preferred designation for someone whose first language is Irish.

A common thread running through the thinking of indigenous people as they reflect on the colonial experience is the focal position of the previously minoritised, or as Chamberlain, writing of the Native American context, has it, “the margins are in fact the centre” (Chamberlain, 2000: 137). The Irish essayist Desmond Fennell put this concept at the heart of the Gaeltacht Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, emphasising the need for self-awareness and the acceptance of responsibility: “Is tú lár an domhain má creidfeá é” [you are the centre of the world, if you would only believe it] (Fennell, D., on Gael Media, 2001). De Paor points out that no matter how powerful the anglophone culture appears to be, it is not universal, implying that a true apprehension of reality must involve connection with one’s own language, or the language of one’s locale: “Is cuma ce chomh mór is atá an taobh amuigh Béarla, níl sé uilíoch. Tá an taobh istigh gaelach beo fós” [it does not matter how

big the English language ‘outside’ is, it is not universal. The Gaelic ‘inside’ is still alive.] (DePaor, quoted in Ó Drisceoil, 2002: 14). In New Zealand, Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal (Ngāti Raukawa, Marutūahu and Ngā Puhī) speaks of the importance of “creative potential”, of taking indigenous language and culture as the starting point for decisions as to progress and development (2009). The term *tino rangatiratanga* [self-determination] is often used in the Māori context to refer to people reclaiming autonomy over various aspects of their lives; social, cultural and political. Royal encourages taking the initiative rather than merely reacting to previous unjust actions of other groups in society, which as Fanon (1968) and others have argued, results only in superficial change (Devadas & Nicholls, 2002: 96)<sup>3</sup>.

### **What is a minority language?**

Cormack (2007: 1-3) provides a useful discussion of some other possible terms for such languages, and why he considers ‘minority’ the best adjective to describe a collection of media outlets in various (mostly European) countries. ‘Regional’ excludes diasporic speakers, and does not specify that the language in question is surrounded by a majority language. To call such languages ‘non-state’ also disregards many situations where a minority language in one state is widely spoken in another, e.g. Russian in Estonia or Turkish in Germany. Whilst ‘subordinated’ or ‘non-hegemonic’ is useful in drawing attention to the power relations between minority languages and their neighbours, it ignores the question of quantity. It also assumes too much politically. Heller explains that in general, “linguistic minorities are created by nationalisms that exclude them” (2006: 7), and whilst this may fit many situations, it is only part of the story in the case of Irish, for example. ‘Endangered’ as defined by Fishman (2001) does not apply to all languages in a minority position, although it coincides with the case of *te reo* in New Zealand over the past few decades. The Council of Europe favours ‘lesser-used’ as a descriptor, but this idea depends on the context and scale; for example, Danish is a national language with about six million speakers, whereas Catalan, considered less than national, has about ten million speakers. Also, some Irish people object to the connotations of ‘lesser-used’, given that their language is nationally recognised. Niamh Hourigan therefore uses the term ‘indigenous minority language’ to refer to regional and national languages in western Europe (Hourigan, 2003: 2-3). Here we return to the contested terrain of the word indigenous. Donald Browne’s working definition is useful: “For my purposes, those who can establish that they have been in the area for the longest time, and continue to live there, would be the indigenous peoples of that area” (Browne, 1996: 4). Whilst the concept of first peoples with continuous presence in a place may seem fitting in most cases, it is not always easy to link such presence with the continued use of a particular language. Does indigeneity depend on language, culture or continuous occupation of a given territory? The complexities of the term ‘indigenous’ have been noted by many (Maaka and Fleras, 2005; Sissons, 2005; inter alia), and in the Irish situation, another term is necessary to distinguish the Irish and English language communities, as both are equally ‘indigenous’.

Whilst Cormack's defence of the term 'minority' is convincing, and usefully draws together a selection of languages which operate in juxtaposition with a more dominant neighbour, I would like to make a case for another subset within this category, to specify the position of a minority language which has been ostensibly recognised by the State, and considered by non-speakers as part of their cultural heritage. Although Irish and te reo Māori are spoken by a minority, both indigenous languages are used to a greater or lesser degree by the majority for the purposes of national identity. It is invidious to use terms like 'natural language', 'first language', 'mother tongue', 'native language' in countries where the first official (and historically prior) language (te reo Māori in New Zealand and Irish in Ireland, for example) is no longer the first language spoken by a majority of the population. The Māori notion of tuakana/ teina [older/ younger sibling] is attractive as a way to describe the relation between te reo and English, but it implies a closer family relationship than the fosterage or cuckoo-in-the-nest history would suggest. In Irish, the term 'mionteanga dúchais' ['native' minority language] seems useful. The word 'dúchas' holds many more connotations than its usual English translation of 'native'. Dúchas has both internal and external qualities, ranging from concepts of inheritance and place, to innate characteristics, or a person's nature (McQuillan, 2003: 5, 88)<sup>4</sup>. However, as there are many people for whom the language cannot be a personal dúchas, although it is their ancestral language, and because the concept is more specific to Ireland than to New Zealand, I will use an English formulation. Developing Hourigan's term 'indigenous minority language' (Hourigan, 2003: 2-3), I say that Irish and te reo are *indigenous national languages* when they are used transparently for daily affairs by their natural speakers, and *national indigenous languages* when they are used consciously for the assertion of identity by non-habitual-speakers. An indigenous national language favours the idea of an inherited and continuous topological and cultural belonging and fluency (bottom-up), whereas a national indigenous language tends more towards the conscious placement of the language in a greater political entity and its (often purely symbolic) use or promotion by State bodies (top-down).

I would also like to borrow Arana, Azpillaga and Narbaiza's expression 'minoritised language' (2007). This term is perhaps even more politicised than 'minority', as it evokes ideas of causation. Arana et al believe that despite – or perhaps because of – the state of unequal relations between majority and minoritised language in society, it is the 'submerged' language which retains a greater power in terms of identity politics (Arana et al., 2007: 152). Indeed, sometimes the bitter history of language repression has led to extreme attitudes to the indigenous language, either in favour (pride in its 'special' spirit) or against (shame at its apparent futility in an anglophone society, and at the speaker's own lack of fluency). Its minoritised condition also means that there is a shortage of good speakers and indeed of new words, and the language is not heard across all social domains. This is the case with both Irish and te reo Māori. The indigenous quality of the language lends it another representational layer – it is a marker of identity, and a very real link to place. This aspect also

affects attitudes towards the language, as those who identify with it claim heritage and continuity with the place where it was traditionally spoken, and those who do not identify with it are left in an uneasy relation with their place.

Having found a way to describe a minority indigenous language with national relevance, the next task is to express the relationship between this language and its people. The terms commonly used to describe bringing an indigenous minority language back to its people are problematic. The word 'normalise' might imply that the language has somehow become sub-, ab- or super-normal. The idea of normalising the already normal (as indeed is the literal meaning of the word Māori) is bizarre. The term 'reclamation' implies loss or theft, which to many would seem a just description of the situation. However, the language is not reclaimed directly. The popular terms 'revitalise' and 'revive' are often heard in cases where a language is under severe pressure and in danger of not being passed on to the next generation. In Ireland, however, where many people have school experience, but lack meaningful personal links with the language in their daily life, the term 'refamiliarisation' is more appropriate. It describes the process of reacquainting oneself with a half-known/ half-forgotten language. Unlike 'normalisation', which implies a wider acceptance and use of the language in various social settings, perhaps with attendant standardisation, 'refamiliarisation' means that people and communities are reconnecting, getting to know their own dialect, and beginning to feel comfortable with the idea of using it themselves.

### **The Image of a Language**

Former director of programming at TG4 Cilian Fennell tries to define the component parts of a language, using the example of Irish:

Cén dath atá ar an dteanga? Tá sí iontach saibhir... [Braitheann an íomhá ar an gcaoi ina bhfuil an teanga] labharta, scríofa, agus feicthe. [What 'image' does Irish have? It is very rich... [The image relies on the way the language is] spoken, written and the way it is perceived] (Fennell, interview 2001)

Here I translate as 'image' the word 'dath', which actually holds a range of meanings, from 'colour' or 'trace', to 'semblance' or 'likeness'. Whilst the written and spoken elements of the language are often addressed by linguists and grammarians, and their interaction with the perceived or felt element is the domain of the socio- and psycho-linguist, my project looks at how the lesser-described but deeply-felt relationship between people and their ancestral language, essential to the image of a language, may be affected by television broadcasting.

Historical and socio-economic clashes between groups result in changes in the balance of power. When power moves to another group, the mana or respect for the deposed groups' language and culture often declines. This affects the attitude of people towards the language. Similarly, activism or social movements originating in speakers or groups associated with the language often raise morale and the profile of the language. It is then linked to citizenship or civil rights, and there is a

recognition of the importance of the language to cultural expression within a larger setting. The image of a language is important, because it is connected to the self-image of people. For speakers, their language is linked to self-esteem, self-sufficiency, identity and respect. For outsiders, a different language may provoke curiosity, fear, defensiveness, humility, or awaken a new perspective. The image of a language can have larger socio-cultural effects on the identity of individuals, communities and the nation.

The image of a language comes from several sources: the status of its speakers, or the group that is associated with the language; its capacity for use in different social domains, such as technical, artistic, familial or public; and the symbolic or pragmatic value it is seen to have. This image is subject to change, often but not exclusively in tandem with the decline or persistence of the language itself. A language may evolve 'organically' over time (from attrition due to mixing with other languages) and change as a result of human intervention (e.g. colonisation, education, language planning, State policies). As the language itself is composed of many elements past and present, its image is not static, and change is inevitable. This image derives from a combination of how the language is presented or promoted and how the language is accepted or used.

'Image' can differ depending on the perspective of the speaker or non-speaker (although there is often a general image of the language in the minds of the public). 'Spirit', on the other hand, is something less easy to define. It is how the language exists in excess of its daily uses. This spirit is that which animates the language, which makes it live. Obviously, languages have been entangled with political rights and the equally strong forces of national and ethnic identity. But in this constellation of powerful forces, language should not be regarded merely as the manifestation of one of the others. It is a force in itself. Speakers of te reo and Irish often refer to the language as being or having a spirit or life force, "te wairua o te reo" (Morgan, interview 2009) or soul (Ní Dhomhnaill, 1997: 48). In Māori culture the language is seen as an "embodiment of... spiritual and mental concepts" (Patterson 1992:92, quoted in Browne, 2005: 20), arising from a living connection with the land (Browne, 2005: 22-24). It may be going too far to say that people can be possessed by a language, but there is certainly something more than disinterested linguistic curiosity at play when, as is the case with kōhanga reo and naíonraí [reo and Irish-medium preschools], non-fluent adults go to considerable trouble that their children may learn the ancestral language, and when political representatives of a country use phrases from an apparently obsolete language in order to assert their difference from their neighbours. "[Languages] are living, breathing organisms holding the connections and associations that define a culture" (Colls, 2009).

Blackmore (2000) argues that language evolved in order to propagate memes (ideas, actions or habits passed on from one person to another). Whilst this idea may be controversial, it seems clear that each language shelters and mediates a unique variety of customs and perspectives on the

world. Perhaps it is this cultural lode for which speakers and would-be speakers really hunger. Pewhairangi notes that whilst many non-Māori are interested to learn te reo and the inner culture, “it’s a thing one can never teach... [one is only ever] scratching the surface” (Pewhairangi, 1978/1992: 11). This is because the culture and the language pertain to more than one world – they belong to the transcendent as much as to the temporal (Marsden, 1992: 137; 2003: 22-3). Or, as the Celtic philosopher John O’Donoghue states, “[t]he eternal world and the mortal world are not parallel, rather they are fused” (O’Donoghue, 1997: 90). This conception of reality is not easily translated to the colonial language of English, which was experienced by the speakers of Irish and te reo as a language disconnected from their world and landscape. Because English remains somehow foreign in these lands, the minoritised language retains its numinous element - partly, it may be argued, in the golden glow of nostalgia, but also as a real aspect of its being. It has been remarked by Fishman that in many cases, people think of their minoritised language in terms of its relation to holiness and kinship (2007b: 72). Language is therefore an important way of our conceptualising ourselves, of our being in the world.

People who have become distanced from the language and its spirit often quest to recover it. Arapera Ngaha’s study shows that the importance people attach to language and culture as identity markers may transmute (Ngaha, 2005), and so I see the term ‘refamiliarisation’ as useful, because it does not insist on the actual use of or ability in the language, but rather on the quality of relationship the person has with it. Of course, this relationship will be deeper if there is some ability to use the language, but it is not a prerequisite. Charles Te Ahukaramū Royal puts forward an interesting paradigm about how people may relate to their language. He sees the most progressive perspective, which was perhaps impossible for many people in previous decades, as a self-sufficient or internally-motivated one. We speak this language, not because we feel obliged to, or in reaction to negative external forces, but rather “because the universe comes to voice in me in that way” (Royal, 2009). Royal draws together the past few decades of questing for social justice and championing cultural revitalisation and adds to their continuing journey a new imperative: creative potential. This idea of creative potential is a frame through which the development of indigenous language television may be better understood and described.

### **Television and language image**

Media broadcasters are powerful conduits for language image, especially in situations where (as with Māori Television and TG4) they provide many citizens with their only possibility for a sustained encounter with te reo or Irish as a living language. But how can television convey the real spirit of the language? Tensions between the conventions of the television industry and traditional norms sometimes cause challenges for programme-makers. However, such tensions may also be productive. The values of the minoritised language can bring a fresh approach to television, encouraging the evolution of genres and the development of different production practices.

Television may also serve the language, showing it in a more complete light than previously possible in national media. Television broadcasting to communities in the nation can help to (re)build the relationship between the minoritised language and its people, as well as assisting a greater appreciation of the language and its speakers for the rest of the nation. The national indigenous language television service can provide different gifts depending on the different perspectives of its audiences. For fluent speakers, it can help them feel at home, as they finally have a generically varied media service. For learners, it can instigate a voyage of reconnection and refamiliarisation with the language. Television can also afford non-speakers a chance to discover what this other cultural and linguistic world can be.

The image of a national language created on television by aural and visual means, and interpreted by programme-commissioners, makers and viewers, bears a burden of 'authenticity' and cultural gravity. In representing a group within the nation - or the nation to itself - the image of the language on television contains multiple strands and has huge power. A mass medium with intimate access to the domestic sphere, television has strong potential in influencing people's perception and use of language. When this national language is spoken by a minority of people, and in the absence of many (if any) other widely available cultural resources or outputs in the language, the role of the television service in affecting audience use and perspective is magnified. There is potential for this minority television broadcaster to be a real cultural alternative, acting as a vector for different perspectives, thanks in part to its distinctive language. The challenge faced by the station is to speak to the smaller audience of minority language speakers (divided by language ability and interest as well as the usual factors) without alienating the wider national audience, whose linguistic (and cultural) competence must be considered less developed.

Television has powerful effects on the image of a language for speakers and non-speakers in different ways. For speakers, it valorises their language, even as they quibble over issues of correctness, mixing, dialectal bias and insufficient range. Television gives the language a degree of "acoustic credibility" (Ó Tuathaigh, 2008), so that young viewers in particular see the language as part of the contemporary world (Howell, 1992: 218). Thomas has also remarked that where a population is dispersed, the broadcast media are particularly important so that the community may remain "cogent and cohesive" (Thomas, 1978: 90). Television thus has the potential to link fluent speakers imaginatively, encouraging a sense of common identity. Finally, for non-speakers, television demonstrates the reality of the language (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000: 94), providing a non-threatening introduction to some aspects of the language and its associated culture and values, promoting cultural and sociolinguistic awareness.

On screen, the language is not only made visible and audible to a broader range of people, but it is also modified by programming and editorial choices. Both Māori Television and TG4 affect the

image of the language by the way in which it is positioned on screen and also in their work practices on set. Subtitles create a new context where perpetual translation is compulsory. Dubbing alternately hides and reveals the gap in translation. On set, the use of the language as 'normal' creates another real life context where its presence is expected. Language image may be affected overtly, through subtitling, dialectal choices or language-focused programmes; or in an 'atmospheric' fashion, such as by glamorous presenters, or unexpected choice of setting. Whilst the overt image of a language via subtitling or content may be relatively straightforward to perceive and interpret, the 'atmospheric' image is more seductive, and has more subtle and less easily measurable effects. It is in this second manner that a minority national language may be used to create television programmes which appeal to audiences of differing linguistic interest and ability, presenting the language spoken by a variety of people in a variety of environments.

The image of the speakers is also linked to the image of the language. Stereotypes of the Māori or Irish people from majority media in the past ranged from the slow-witted and unreliable native (on occasion tending towards savage criminality) through to the turgid keeper of tradition to the daring and insouciant hero, physically able and with a rooted understanding of the land. Such two-dimensional views from the outsider's eye did not represent anything close to the full range of indigenous experience. Part of the challenge of the indigenous language television broadcaster is that it operates in a mediasphere where the memories of such images linger on. In depicting real people (warts and all) and insisting on the internal diversity of the 'native' people, the broadcaster challenges majority audiences who have been accustomed to the more 'black and white' images of 'mainstream' media sources.

The metaphor of providing access to another space is commonly used by minority broadcasters who wish to appeal to a majority audience. Margaret Mary Murray, Head of Service of BBC ALBA, regards broadcasting as "a door through which to access language and culture" (Murray, interview 2008). Functioning as a 'door' or 'window', the minority television station provides the first sustained representation of the culture which is made widely available to people who are not part of it. Donald Browne argues that minority media are important to the outsider group, as they "help remind majority cultures that there are many ways of thinking, feeling, and expressing, not a few of which could increase the majority's sense of interdependency, compassion, and mutual respect" (Browne, 1996: x). The role of the national minority language station is thus to display, uncover, explore, share, bear witness to, juxtapose, entertain and serve, validating 'natural speakers' without frightening sensitive learners or those who feel distant from the language and associated culture.

Mac Giolla Chríost's (2005) idea that the interface between languages and traditions is a middle-ground, or No Man's Land, may be useful in considering the task of national indigenous minority language broadcasters. Rather than a frontier or a border, this middle ground is a place of



interchange. Cultural production in this space should lead to increased attention from and interaction with the external audience, including criticism. The importance of taking indigenous norms as a starting point for honest cultural interchange has also been figured in terms of a metaphysical space in the Irish context, where Kearney and other intellectuals writing for *The Crane Bag* in the 1970s and 1980s imagined a locus where people could meet and think and talk. Although this 'fifth province' is metaphoric and poetic, its purpose and function parallel those of a national minority television service<sup>5</sup>. To link this image to international scholarship, I consider the possibilities afforded by such an intangible space as comparable to Homi Bhabha's conception of 'third space', which is the space "which enables other positions to emerge" (1994: 89). The third space has been widely interpreted in a general sense as a meeting point for old and new cultures (usually cultures of the excoloniser and excolonised<sup>6</sup>) where the two combine in unexpected ways to produce a third term which is greater than the sum of its parts. Indigenous National Indigenous Language Television seems to provide rich potential for such imagined spaces to form.

## **2 Why Ireland and New Zealand? Why TG4 and Māori Television?**

On opposite sides of the world, the countries of Ireland and New Zealand nonetheless have several features in common. Both are island nations with complex colonial histories, and both grapple with the strong anglo-american influence of larger countries. Most importantly, both attempt to negotiate a distinctive cultural identity through the status afforded to their respective indigenous languages, te reo Māori and an Ghaeilge [the Irish language].

In dealing with "indigenous linguistic minorities" (Cormack, 2000a: 385), it is important to be aware of the specificity of each situation. In Ireland, there is no major ethnic difference between speakers of Irish and the rest of the population – indeed, the difference is more geographic than social - whereas in New Zealand, te reo as a real spoken language is largely identified with Māori people. This means that the setting up of a national television station in the minority language has different consequences in each country. Although there are similarities between Māori- and Irish-speakers, as for instance in patterns of language loss and reclamation, the experiences of both groups are not identical. In Ireland, the State has claimed the language as part of its national image, whilst not actually using or developing it effectively, whereas in New Zealand, the State (after great reluctance) categorises the language as a taonga [cultural treasure], but not as an essential aspect of national identity. Thus the television broadcaster faces a dilemma of relevance, and is torn between providing a community service to actual speakers, with help to learners (in the 'indigenous national language' model), and presenting the minority indigenous group to the larger ignorant group (in the 'national indigenous language' approach). This is not to ignore the other peoples living in the two countries, who have little stake in these sets of images or communities.

As national indigenous channels, TG4 and Māori Television have several characteristics which set them apart from other minority language television broadcasters. Few other minority language media outlets enjoy a terrestrial network that reaches the entire country, and most are regarded by the majority population as somehow irrelevant to or disconnected from the nation in which they broadcast. The unique atmosphere in the Māori Television and TG4 stations comes from a clear awareness of living a distinctive culture within a nation which recognises that culture (and its associated language) albeit in an ambivalent way. The sense of self and sense of audience is strongly coloured by this awareness. Ireland and New Zealand also have similar broadcasting environments: a few free-to-air channels (four in Ireland and six in New Zealand), with English as a dominant language on all but one of them, and an increasing availability of digital and cable options. Both stations attempt to reclaim a national (but minority) language and compete with other broadcasters to attract an audience by appealing to a sense of identity.

This shifting sense of identity between minoritised and majority culture and language communities is recognised by Bryn Evans, the Pākehā [white New Zealander] producer of a series for Māori Television which draws strongly on Māori kaupapa and norms<sup>7</sup>:

It's not my culture, not my identity, but I share this land with another culture. Television can help in breaking down this ignorance. We are two different cultures. Our strength lies in sharing our knowledge. (Evans, interview 2010)

The image of the language is subtly redrawn in programmes which use the language. Both 'language discovery' (for non-speakers) and 'language familiarisation' (for learners) can be seen in the material broadcast by Māori Television and TG4, and indeed often the two overlap. The proportion and type of language use seen on the two stations is a reflection of the ability and interest of the imagined audiences. Such an approach evokes the well-known 'talking in/out' strategy put forward by Barry Barclay (Barclay, 1990: 74). According to Barclay, there are two ways in which a minority culture may be put on the screen: a local version which speaks to the community on their own terms ('talking in'), or a more tourist-oriented, educational or distanced model explaining the obvious in order to attract the interest of people from outside the culture ('talking out').

The transformative potential of the media means that television services like Māori Television and TG4 can help to move society towards an awareness of indigenous difference. As Ó hÍfearnáin puts it: "television can have an effect on cultural production, and the smaller the culture or the language the more the effect" (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000: 105). Stuart sees the growth of contemporary Māori media as "a wholesale adoption into the [national] culture which has never before been seen in Aotearoa/New Zealand" and which "will force culture change" (Stuart, 2007: 26). Critiquing the status quo is one possible use of minority media, but in actual fact a 'reversal' is neither desirable nor feasible (Hall, 2001: 342). Rather than creating blatantly 'opposite' images, in fact, the process is two-way. There must be intelligent engagement with the excolonist culture in order to refute it.

There must also be a reawakening and development of indigenous culture and language so that there is a strong sense of identity, and in order to meet the excolonial culture from a strong, but not monolithic, base. The emergence, manifestation or development of the spirit of a people through television is necessarily different from its antecedent forms. Debates arise as to the translation of some cultural aspects to a national screen, and the sense that in an environment of scarcity a minority media outlet suffers from “oppressive authenticity” (Sissons, 2005) or a compulsion to (re)invent tradition for outsiders’ eyes. Neither TG4 nor Māori Television was set up to be a museum or archive, but rather a contemporary medium for public entertainment and information<sup>8</sup>. In her reading of Irish language literature, Nic Eoin points out the continuous power of the native culture despite centuries of oppression, and its ability to adapt to conditions of modernity:

léiriú ar theacht aniar an phobail Ghaelaigh agus ar chumas na teanga maireachtáil, fiú más ar éigean féin é, ar thalamh chrua an fichiú aois. [a demonstration of the resourcefulness of the Gaelic community and of the ability of the language to live on, even if only just about, in the hard ground of the twentieth century] (Nic Eoin, 2005:14)

There is no doubt but that TG4 and Māori Television have an impact on both the nation in which they operate and on their respective languages and cultures. Acting as alternative public service channels, Māori Television and TG4 may beat the ‘first’ national broadcasters at their own game – but their role extends far beyond this. It is more a question of how indigenous minority language and cultural norms may have an impact on the apparatus and conventions of national television.

Much majority film, television and literature which feature indigenous characters or a ‘minority’ story consists of people on the outside looking in, and we never see the alternative – people inside looking in, or indeed people on the inside looking out (Ó Cofaigh, interview 2001). The strength of an alternative media service is in part to convey a different epistemology through similar technology, perhaps through different visual styles and attendant critiques and evaluations. The ultimate goal is to “transform” or identify other ways of seeing and being.

Television genres are a useful starting point for an enquiry into the ‘alterity’ of minority language broadcasting production. When conventions and genres are borrowed and given a local twist, the question of cultural specificity becomes more urgent. Browne refers to this reliance on pre-existing formats as ‘cultural dependency’ (Browne, 1996: 230). However, the use of established codes may well be necessary for the television ‘language’ to successfully reach audiences accustomed to these norms. It is also possible to produce a programme generically similar in appearance to conventional majority formats, but where the spirit or *wairua* (Barclay, 1990; Waititi, 2008) is different. Ó Scolaí claims that only barrenness results from an imitation of the majority forms without an inner light of story from Irish language culture (2008). Obviously, it is difficult for people to apprehend whether this proper spirit is in the programme or not. Others therefore prefer a more radical rupture with the televisual ‘syntax’ and conventions, claiming that no real representation of the minority language group is possible when using anglophone methods of television production (Rickit, 2009).

If conventional media tools can be used against the grain in ‘producing’ native communities, and imagining cultural futures (Ginsburg, 1991), it must be recognised that these different uses eventually change the nature of the tools as well. Developments in approaches to Māori film production provide an interesting template for the ways in which an indigenous television service might try to engage with its own culture even whilst producing material for audiences from different backgrounds. Ideas of protocol and tikanga [custom] on set and indeed throughout the production process link to a larger political process of “decolonising methodologies” (Barclay 2003; Smith 1999). The values and approaches of Kaupapa Māori are explored by Barry Barclay in his Fourth Cinema project. Barclay writes about a different approach to the camera, a ‘first peoples’ way of filming. He suggests, for example, that a work be screened free of charge<sup>9</sup>. There is no comparable development in Irish language film-making or television production, as such cultural practices are either not codified or do not apply in the Irish situation. However, there is the sense of a distinct Gaeltacht sensibility (Ó Cofaigh, interview 2001; Quinn, 2009), which is only recently appearing on the national screen. I consider this interiority to be related as much to story and spirit as to any particular practices during production.

The importance of this spirit or interiority cannot be overemphasised. It links to the relationship between people and their language, and people and the land. The notion of a third space or fifth province in which such relationships might be free to develop further is attractive. I regard indigenous national language television as creating such mixed and exciting spaces: the space of the screen, the space of the set and the virtual public space of reception. In using an ancestral language, TG4 and Māori Television strongly link to the land and to the past. In broadcasting to the nation at large, they represent and speak to a range of people with very different cultural loyalties, and they address the very notion of nation. By using the technology of television, the channels are communicating and insisting on the place of the indigenous language and styles of thinking in the contemporary world. Although the internet is powerful for individual interests, television is still the greatest medium in terms of group viewing. This physical and diffused ‘togetherness’ both invokes the indigenous cultures of community activity, and reawakens the ‘imagined community’ of the nation in an age where the idea of the nation is verging on the obsolete.

### 3 Reflection on Research Process

This project takes a different approach to much work to date in this subsection of the field of Minority Language Media. By combining interviews, observation and analysis, as well as considering the political and cultural context of TG4 and Māori Television, this comparative study contributes to the opening up of a new area for research, the area of National Indigenous Minority Language Media.

One of the aims of my research is to situate Māori Television and TG4 in their historical and cultural context, that they might better be compared and contrasted. Bourdieu comments that the value or 'capital' of a threatened language cannot be saved "unless... [one saves] the whole set of political and social conditions of production" (1991: 57). Bourdieu's statement implies an approach which takes into consideration these conditions. To research the image of the language on Māori Television and TG4, I first addressed about the history of Irish and te reo in their respective countries, and the place they hold today. This provides the context for current attitudes and policies about language use in various domains, including the media. During my time in New Zealand, I visited marae, and attended conferences, hui [gatherings] and workshops in the areas of indigenous broadcasting, language revival, production protocols, future directions and documentary. Whilst in Ireland I participated in a conference on Irish language literature and culture, and attended the Celtic Media Festival.

As media content (interpretation and critique) and the conditions of production are in a mutually dependent relationship, my research involves interviews with practitioners as well as analytical readings. I interviewed over forty individuals altogether, from independent production companies and iwi radio, as well as people who work directly with or in TG4 and Māori Television. For the convenience of my interviewees, the interviews took place in their workplace or at a hui, or else in a neutral public venue such as a hotel or a café. In doing this, I respected the norms laid out by Cram (2003)<sup>10</sup>. I have worked in production for independent companies making material for broadcast on both channels, and I was present at live studio recordings in both Auckland and Baile na hAbhann. I am a member of Ngā Aho Whakaari (Māori producers' organisation) and the Irish Association for Popular Culture Studies. My background experience is relevant in that it gave me a link to the people I interviewed who work in television production. I am also accustomed to an oral culture, where relationship is strengthened during talk, and it is very important to respect the other person's contribution<sup>11</sup>. As mentioned earlier, the most significant gap in academic writing on minority language television is in relation to programming. The third section of this thesis is an analytical treatment of broadcast output as media texts, rather than as a social or cultural manifestation. To do this, I watched programmes from Māori Television and TG4 and analysed them in terms of their interaction with and contribution to the image of the language.

In their attempt to balance the interests of different audience groups, Māori Television and TG4 demonstrate that a minority language broadcaster does not have to appeal solely to minority language speakers. The success of the stations in attracting people from 'outside' indicates their international scope, and can serve as a model for other minority language media outlets who might wish to extend the image of their language and culture to a wider viewership. The inventive ways by which the more traditional elements of language and culture are translated to the television medium also show the creativity possible when the indigenous language is given a space in which to breathe and live according to its own lights. I would like to contribute towards the development of the audio-visual sector in terms of linking production and practice to this at first glance incongruous older culture. It is important to me that tradition and language are not jettisoned without thought, but are allowed space and opportunity to develop organically for the generations to come. I would like this project to be useful to practitioners and policy-makers in both countries, and indeed to people in other places who are embarking on similar or comparable broadcasting ventures. It is worthwhile. It does make a difference to the entire host country when the native genius [spiorad cruthaitheach/ hau] of a people is given space and grace to flourish.

#### **4 Outline of Thesis Content**

Although as indigenous national minority language broadcasters TG4 and Māori Television have many points in common, they are not comparable in every respect. For this reason, some chapters will treat one station more than the other in greater depth.

Chapter 1 traces the history of language shift in Ireland and New Zealand and explores the unusual relationship many people (particularly non-fluent speakers) have with their minoritised indigenous language today. The role of the state in responding to community demands in respect of language rights is also examined. Despite ostensibly supporting Irish since political independence, the Irish state did not have sufficient resources to implement a comprehensive language policy. In New Zealand, the majority group had been unwilling to see te reo as other than an irrelevant patois tied to the past, but over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, gradually began to move from a situation of unequal partnership to a degree of recognition. The power of television as image-rehabilitator or image-maker in the context of the relationship between people and language is also discussed.

Chapter 2 explores the position of the indigenous national language broadcaster in a public service mould. Obligated to 'talk out' to the nation, whilst also 'talking in' to fluent-speaking communities, both stations tread this dual pathway with a strong sense of self-awareness. The indigenous television service draws on the alterity of its language and culture to provide a new perspective on images of the nation and images of the local elements which combine to make a 'nation'. The

inclusion of international material which resonates with indigenous, local or national concerns also serves to position the television service as a global force. By taking the minoritised language and culture as the starting point, both TG4 and Māori Television engage on their own terms in an exploratory and nuanced relationship with the world beyond the nation-state.

Chapter 3 outlines the history of the development of indigenous national language television broadcasting in Ireland and New Zealand. It outlines the inadequate service provided for te reo and Irish speakers by existing national channels in their respective countries, and traces the campaigns of community activists and programme-makers to achieve a separate media outlet which would use and promote the minoritised language. The groups in both countries employed similar tactics – from petitioning and lobbying political representatives, to the picketing or occupation of studios, to legal objections and challenges, until finally political support was won. Māori Television was established with a unique governance structure, whereas TG4 was initially set up under the wing of RTÉ, obtaining ‘independence’ in 2007. Both channels co-operate with existing national broadcasters in relation to programme and archive-sharing, but maintain a distinctly different image and identity to these other stations. Neither Māori Television nor TG4 is guaranteed continuous state support, although after uneasy public relations at the beginning, both enjoy a significant measure of audience recognition.

Chapter 4 investigates how the challenges posed by using a minority language in national broadcasting are tackled by Māori Television, TG4 and practitioners in the independent production community in both countries. The dual purpose of the stations appears to set them an impossible task. Firstly, the task of reaching and sometimes ‘teaching’ audiences with differing degrees of linguistic or cultural fluency or interest is addressed. Then decisions as to language planning and policy are explored, looking at the way a broadcaster might engage with issues of ‘standard’, quality and dialect in order to better appeal to its diverse audiences whilst remaining true to the language. The use of language on screen, including choices about translation, voicing and subtitling, is also discussed. Finally, the other crucial component in minority language broadcasting is examined - the use of the language on set. Both TG4 and Māori Television are aware of the relationship between language use on set and on screen, and are currently devising measures to encourage its use behind the scenes. Not only does this show a real-life respect for the language, leading to a good level in the programme for broadcast, but it also encourages the development of Gaeltacht [Irish-speaking area] or iwi [tribal] production initiatives. The centrality of these communities of fluent-speakers to the continued success of both TG4 and Māori Television cannot be over-emphasised.

Chapter 5 explores issues of representation and genre, as well as the importance of accommodating different practices in production in order to respect indigenous custom. This area is more pertinent to tikanga Māori than to Gaeltacht scenarios, although the ‘authentic’ use of the language applies

equally to both. A discussion of generic choices taken by Māori Television and TG4 follows, noting that existing genres from 'mainstream' television may successfully be twisted when approached through the prism of an alternative language or differing cultural norms. There is also mention of the strategies used in appealing to different audience groups by the use of familiar genres. The final section of this chapter carries out an analysis of three different types of genre seen on the channels: live action drama (*Aifric*, TG4), which through its use of Irish creates an alternative 'universe' for its young audience; language-learning soap opera (*Kōrero Mai*, Māori Television), which marries the educational and entertainment functions of the public service broadcaster to create a series scaffolding learner in their use of te reo in everyday situations; and finally, traditional singing programmes on both channels, *Abair Amhrán* (TG4) and *Mōteatea* (Māori Television), which foreground an approach to song drawn specifically from the oral tradition of both cultures. In each case, the programme is viewed in relation to the image of the language it presents.

In conclusion, two strands are considered: how the indigenous language interacts with television, resulting in change for both, and how relationships between a linguistic minority and the national majority may be developed and re-imagined via an indigenous national television broadcaster. The first loyalty of the channel is to its *croíphobal* [core audience], but because of its public funding and position, it must also speak to the wider nation. The importance of the relative and increasing independence of Māori Television and TG4 is that, unlike previous media representation and in-nation understanding, such relationships can now be seen starting from the minority and 'first' point of view. Involving the (re)invention of both of linguistic tradition and of television practices, the emergence, manifestation and development of the spirit of a minoritised people through television broadcasting is one of the most exciting phenomena in contemporary television studies.

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<sup>1</sup> See the glossary at the beginning of the thesis for translations of commonly-used Māori and Irish words.

<sup>2</sup> Standardisation is the process by which a particular language variety takes on the role of 'high status' dialect and is associated with a dominant group. It may be that one dialect is 'imposed' as the standard, or may also result from a combination of different dialects into a mixed form. I use hybridisation to refer to the phase when this process has not yet been completed. The implications of the role television may play in language change are discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Bargh claims that acts of resistance need not stem merely from reactions to the work of the coloniser, but be motivated by "local, deontological or familial reasons" (2007: 17). Although she chooses to figure



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such actions as resistant, they are in fact complete in themselves. There is no need to link them to the coloniser but for the fact that such actions have a potentially decolonising effect.

<sup>4</sup> According to McQuillan, the contemporary use of the term *dúchas* implies “the internalised or personalised world, it belongs to each individual within but also to the community as an aggregate of those individuals” (McQuillan, 2004: 36).

<sup>5</sup> The fifth province was to be a metaphysical space, a place beyond the original fifth province of *Mídhe*, where spiritual and land power resided. According to Céitinn, Tuathal Téachtmhar established *Mídhe* as a symbolic centre, a microcosm of the four provinces, signifying an underlying unity (McQuillan, 2004: 61).

<sup>6</sup> I use the term ‘excolonial’ as a means of avoiding the complex connotations of ‘post-colonial’. I define ‘excolonial’ as a state or situation which has grown out of a past where the processes of colonisation have made their mark. ‘Excolonisers’ are not always aware of this facet of their history, and the responsibilities it imposes in respect of the ‘excolonised’, but they are nonetheless products of this history and heritage. I consider the ‘excolonised’ people as those whose ancestors have suffered under colonisation, and whose sensibility is coloured by- although not limited to – an awareness of this past. Whilst the term ‘post-colonial’ of necessity invokes teleological connotations or ideas of temporal progress, ‘excolonial’ emphasises rather that the colonial experience is one of the roots of contemporary conditions.

<sup>7</sup> *Tātai Hono* (Blue Bach Productions (2005-8), BraveStar Productions (2009-10)) is a series which follows people “questing for an identity and for certainty... recovering their sense of self and place” (Evans, 2010). It explores *whakapapa* and *hono*[linking] people back to their roots.

<sup>8</sup> Seamus Deane of the Field Day movement remarks that people mistakenly think that “in order to resist the colonial process, they must... stabilise for themselves an idea of being Irish... [In fact,] the moment you stabilise your identity you have done part of the job of the imperial system. Imperial systems are about mapping, geography, stability, characterising people within certain fixed limits” (Deane, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> This is not easily accommodated in the bureaucracy of a television station, hedged by State funding and obligation, where making a programme often becomes an exercise in administrative agility.

<sup>10</sup> These are similar to the television production guidelines proposed by Tainui Stephens (see Chapter 5). See also Appendix A for further information on how the interviews were conducted.

<sup>11</sup> Russell Bishop notes that in Māori decision-making *hui*, “the discourse spirals, the flow of talk may seem circuitous, opinions may vary and waver, but the seeking of a collaboratively constructed story is central” (Bishop, 2005: 122).

# CHAPTER 1

## LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENT

*Linguistic relations have always been power relations.* (Piron, 1988: 9)

Language history is embedded in the broader context of politics, power and human agency. This chapter traces the history of how Irish and te reo Māori became minority languages in their own lands. This is a story of forced language shift and cultural colonisation, followed by moves towards reclamation and a demand for state recognition. The similarities in the manner of indigenous language loss in Ireland and New Zealand may be attributed to the particular procedures of Empire in both places. As the native language was squeezed out of the public domain through imposition and violence, status accrued to the colonisers' language, and gradually it became necessary for civic survival. In this way, speakers of the indigenous language experienced the loss of their sociolinguistic habitus (Gibbons, 2006: 55; Reedy, 2000).

The effects of colonisation often leave colonised peoples with a complicated relation to their heritage, subsequent to the suppression of both culture and language. The processes of colonisation also contribute to current attitudes amongst both excolonisers and excolonised towards language revival. Of course, there are not exact parallels, as the timeframe in Ireland and New Zealand is different by about a century, but the processes are remarkably comparable. In these two countries, speakers and would-be speakers of the indigenous language have taken a similar path to recovery of the language, with one major difference: in Ireland the language has been linked to the idea of an independent nation for over 200 years, and to the nation-state since political independence some 90 years ago, whereas in New Zealand, te reo Māori has been associated with the Māori ethnic group as a Treaty partner and stakeholder in the New Zealand polity<sup>1</sup>. Both languages currently enjoy a level of recognition, but they are still subject to varying levels of institutional and public support. One striking example of official support that does exist is the dedicated national television stations Whakaata Maori (Māori Television) and Teiliffs na Gaeilge (TG4), funded by government and broadcasting to the entire country.

This chapter discusses the language environment within which these two channels operate. The first section explores the politics of language and the current status of the indigenous language in New Zealand and Ireland. In the second, there is an overview of the historical background in each country which has led to the position of the language today. The third section examines the role of the contemporary nation-state in preserving and promoting language, and questions the degree and efficaciousness of government involvement. An important element of contemporary State

language policy is broadcasting, so the chapter ends with a look at how the television stations might fit into a larger 'national' plan for language revival.

## **1 The Politics of Language**

Language is a powerful and adaptable system of signs and an emotionally resonant way of communicating knowledge, relationships and ideas from one generation to the next. It is a combination of the ineffable and the material, where spirit, identity and thought together form an 'essence' of the language, and socio-cultural conditions and manifestations of the language affect its use in public and private. In the case of an indigenous minority language there is a strange aura of otherness - non-speakers reify it and emphasise its symbolic function, and native speakers are often forced into acute meta-linguistic awareness by its paradoxical official status which is both national and minority.

In Ireland and New Zealand, the politics of language has been played out in the tension between the practice of natural speakers of the indigenous language, and the role of the State. In Ireland, the State gave the Irish language prominence as a symbol of national identity and distinctiveness, but did not engage in any consistent or constructive manner with the 'real' speakers of the language, most of whom lived in economically disadvantaged areas. In New Zealand for many years, the Māori language was considered important to some communities, but not to the nation as a whole; and the 1960 Hunn Report expressly recommended that Māori language and culture should gradually die out in favour of a British-oriented New Zealand way of life (Hunn, 1960). After several waves of protest action by Māori groups in the 1970s, this cavalier perspective on the language finally gave way to a certain acceptance of its mana [prestige].

A good description about the relation between language and politics is provided by Mike Cormack in an article about Minority Language Media, where he says,

Issues concerning minority languages are essentially concerned with issues of power. [L]anguage difference... is at the heart of cultural difference. But of course politics and culture are not separate domains with only occasional or accidental overlaps. Politics is at the heart of culture, and culture is a political issue. For a minority language, cultural politics is the only kind of politics. (Cormack, 2005: 108)

In this way, language is more than a system of communication. As McQuillan has it, "While we have an innate ability to acquire language, our ability to *use* language is mediated culturally" (2003: 1). Our ability to use a particular language depends on several factors- our competence in it, a place in which we may use it and be understood, and our willingness to use this language rather than another. Our attitude to language is shaped by its status in society, and personal experience, as well as by a perceived connection to a sense of identity, history, and belonging.

## 1.1 Language Use and Status

In both Ireland and New Zealand, the indigenous language is the first official national language. In Ireland, English is a second official language under the Constitution [Bunreacht na hÉireann], whereas in New Zealand, English is a de facto official language, whilst te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language have de jure official status under the Māori Language Act 1987 and the New Zealand Sign Language Act 2006 respectively. Although to declare a minority language ‘national’ is to make a strong symbolic statement, official status does not guarantee everyday usage, and may not reflect general attitudes towards the use of the language. Table 1 provides an overview of the population and use of official languages in both countries.

*Table 1 Overview of Ireland and New Zealand (area, population)*

	Ireland	New Zealand
Total Area:	84,421 km sq.	268,021 km sq.
Population 2006:	4.2 million	4.17 million
Official Languages: (% speakers)	Irish (41.9%), English (no figures available)	Māori (4.1%), English (95.9%)

*Source: Census 2006 (Tātauranga Aotearoa/ Statistics New Zealand and Príomh-Oifig Staidrimh na hÉireann/ Central Statistics Office Ireland)*

Ability to speak the indigenous language in both Ireland and New Zealand is linked to geographical location, ethnic affiliation and educational opportunity. Similarly, opportunity to speak the indigenous language is often limited to certain social domains, whereas English is commonly used across a range of situations<sup>2</sup>. According to the 2006 New Zealand census, after English (spoken by 95.9% of the population), the most common language in which people could have a conversation about everyday things is Māori, spoken by 4.1% (157,110 people) (Statistics NZ, 2006). In Ireland, where Irish has featured to varying degrees in the education system for the past 80 years, the disparity is less dramatic. In the 2006 Irish Census, 41.9% of the population reported an ability to speak Irish (Central Statistics Office, Ireland 2007). These percentages are illustrated in Figure 1, as a proportion of the total Māori/Irish population.

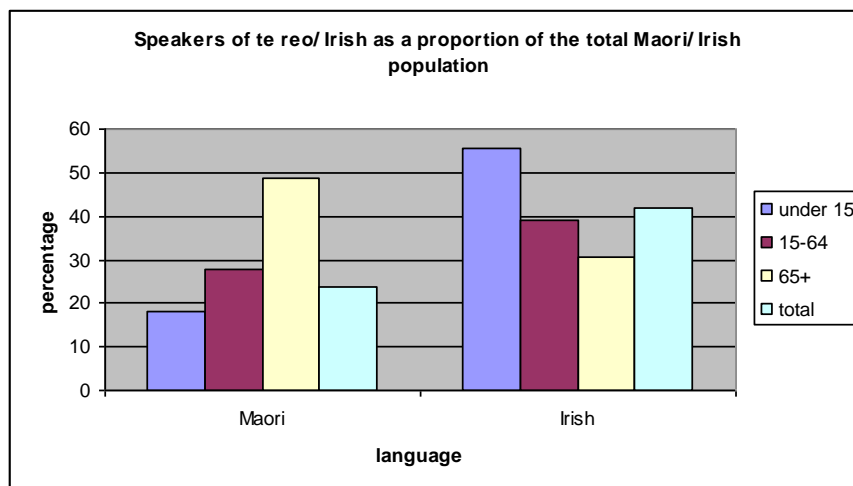


Figure 1 Speakers of te reo/Irish as a proportion of the total Māori/ Irish population

Source: Census 2006 (*Tātauranga Aotearoa/ Statistics New Zealand and Príomh-Oifig Staidrimh na hÉireann/ Central Statistics Office Ireland*)

It is a strange phenomenon that linguistic ability does not translate to use of Irish. Of the nearly 1.66 million people in Ireland who report themselves as able to speak Irish, just over 1 million (60%) either never speak the language or speak it less frequently than weekly (Central Statistics Office, Ireland 2007). Many of the 40% who use it frequently do so in the classroom. Even in the Gaeltacht [Irish-speaking] areas, only 36,500 people (56.8% of all Irish speakers in the Gaeltacht) speak Irish on a daily basis, and 38.3% of these speak it only within the education system<sup>3</sup>. Máirtín Ó Murchú describes the situation in Ireland as a whole as

a societal bilingualism in which Irish is used ritually in certain public functions, and depends to a significant extent on the education system for maintenance, but continues to be spoken as a first language in a minority of households linked together in tenuous social networks... [which is] bilingualism without diglossia. (Ó Murchú, 2002: 484-5)

This is despite the apparently high status of the language; Irish is taught in 40 universities around the world, has official status in the European Union, and is readily available on internet, television and radio. Nonetheless, considering the almost complete annihilation of the language in the past, the current situation shows probably “the highest level of competence in the language in Ireland since its great demise after the famine in the 1840s” (MacGréil and Rhatigan, 2009), although most speakers today are second-language learners (Ní Neachtain, 2000: 155; McCloskey, 2001: 46).

In New Zealand, the situation is different, because there is a huge deficit in the ability of most people to speak te reo. Whilst some Māori words and concepts have entered Kiwi English (e.g. hui, pōwhiri, kauri), it is difficult for a non-speaker without whānau [family] links to access the language, and compared to Ireland, there are far fewer opportunities for education in te reo. However, since the 1970s, Māori people have been striving to bring the language back to its people, in the face of considerable opposition from successive governments<sup>4</sup>. For the future of a language, the number of young speakers is crucial. Projected population figures show nearly a million Māori

people in New Zealand in 2051 (22% of the overall population, and 33% of children), which lends urgency to the idea of supporting language reclamation (Durie, 2005, quoted in O'Sullivan, 2006: 188). Even in the absence of ideological or cultural congruence, the state finds itself obliged by democratic principles and a concern for self-preservation to support the indigenous language as an important cultural treasure of the people. Pragmatic political considerations join with ideological forces in designing a language policy.

## **1.2 Attitudes of People to their Indigenous Language**

*It is difficult not to be self-conscious about a language simultaneously native and foreign.*

(Deane, 1985: 13)

Each particular language holds a unique perspective on the world, and in the case of minority cultures, is often the last bulwark against assimilation into a globalised multiculturalism. Each language has its own way of expressing certain ideas and traditions, making an exact translation impossible. For vibrant languages associated with strong cultures, there is not the same sense of urgency (and occasional conservatism) as there is with minority or threatened languages, where the link between language and culture is constantly invoked, in the hope that at least one will survive. Although language is not an "isomorphic road map" to its culture (Fishman, 1991: 21), the two are closely connected. Michael Cronin argues that the alternative views of reality afforded by each language "are not guaranteed by the internal, formal structures of a language itself, but by the language as embedded in a context and in a history and in a culture" (Cronin, 2005: 15). This harmonises with the words of Syd Jackson: "history, our legends.. our genealogy... it is the language which makes our culture intelligible"(Jackson, 1993). Dr Tamati Reedy (former Secretary for Māori Affairs) takes the connection a step further in making the point that culture, as carried by language, is an intrinsic part of identity:

Māori language is being seen by many as a rallying point for a restructuring and piecing together of a much broken and damaged people. It serves to restore an identity for people who see themselves as Maori and want to be recognised as such. (Reedy, quoted in Waitangi Tribunal, 1986, section 8.1.4)

It is clear from Reedy's statement that the nexus of language, culture and identity is a field which people may consciously enter. The ideological links between words and being are forged through the history of the people and their relations with other groups. Alexandra Mystra Jaffe's 'polynomic perspective' similarly treats the relationship of linguistic form and practice to community and identity as "an emergent property of social and political life" (Jaffe, 1999: 65)<sup>5</sup>.

'Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Māori' [The language is the life force of Māori self-respect/ identity]. Quoting this whakataukī [proverb], Sir James Henare, Ngā Puhī leader and veteran of the Māori Battalion, underlines the importance of language to a sense of self in terms of a larger group. "If the language dies... then, I ask our own people who are we?"(Waitangi Tribunal, 1986). The Irish seanfhocal [proverb], "Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam" [a country without its language is a country

without a soul], equally evokes the centrality of language to a sense of national or collective identity. The sentiment expressed by Sir Apirana Ngata, at a time when te reo was more widely spoken than today, has its echo in Irish Romantic nationalism: “Ki te kore koe e mōhio ki te kōrero Māori ehara koe i te Māori” [If you don’t know how to speak Māori, then you’re not Māori] (Ngata, quoted by Kāretu, 1993: 223). Linking language and national or cultural identity may seem obvious, but its corollary (that linguistic ability is a prerequisite for authentic identity) has been fiercely questioned. Although language is part of identity, it is not the only part. It is claimed that “[C]ulture can be maintained without the language; and perception of the (desired) identity changes over time and therefore the choice of language to express that identity also changes” (Pandharipande, 2002: 228).

Essentialised and associated with traditional culture, the indigenous language as taonga or cultural treasure is a popular discourse in both Ireland and New Zealand. The anxiety to cling to a language as a marker of identity and certainty, even when the possibility for interchange or communication through the medium is under question, is one of the paradoxical features of the post-colonial relation to the ‘original’ language. Iarfhlaith Watson comments that despite extensive translation of Irish culture into English over many centuries, the spirit of the original language continues to exceed the secondary texts: “Although it may no longer be the case that the Irish language holds any unique cultural treasures, it is a cultural treasure in its own right” (Watson, 2003: ix). Māori tradition regards te reo as a taonga, an intangible treasure (Waitangi Tribunal, 1989: section 4.2.4). These perspectives privilege the language per se over its communicative capacity.

### **Whakamā or Pride?**

Census numbers do not reflect the hold the native language has on people; there is often a sense of loss or guilt amongst those who cannot speak it well. In the eyes of those ‘outside’ who half-wish to be ‘inside’, the language can take on almost magical qualities, and this is extended to become a sort of aura around ‘good’ or ‘native’ speakers. Whilst such attitudes partly derive from a time-honoured respect for the oral tradition, they are also a result of the pain of exclusion and the fear that what is supposed to be their own language has become inaccessible to the people.

The two ‘national’ linguistic communities (Māori and English, and Irish and English) overlap to some degree, but are far from being co-terminous. Monolingual English-speakers sometimes find it difficult to believe that a fluent speaker of English whose first language is the indigenous one may truly prefer to use the first language in situations of stress, such as when dealing with institutions and the court system (Ó Dónaill, 2007). For those who speak a minority language fluently, it is often difficult to find opportunities to use their language in public, except to people known to the speaker, as fluent speakers are not visibly identifiable (Le Morvan, 2000: 130). In most cases, if they are not sure of their interlocutor’s level of fluency, and to avoid embarrassment, people will stick to

the majority language (Ó Riagáin & Ó Gliasáin, 1994: 38; Fennell, 2004: 29). When Irish is spoken fluently in public, it may embarrass both the speaker and the non-fluent listener, as Titley explains, “People like the fact that it is out there, but feel uncomfortable when it is spoken in their presence” (2004: 22).

In New Zealand, there is also a vocal minority of Pākehā who have little respect for Māori people, language or culture<sup>6</sup>. Even amongst those who harbour no ill-will, most are oblivious to ‘the real’ te reo, imbricated with tikanga [cultural values], although there is a growth in interest in the language as a marker of identity, or an assertion of distinctiveness from global anglophone culture. Such people are pleased to utter one or two set phrases, but consider that it is for others to actually use the language fluently and ‘normally’. Similarly, most people in Ireland cannot deal with the reality of Irish. Many regret not knowing it and yet are somehow proud not to know it. Ó Murchú also notes that “Irish is regarded positively by both [language] groups as an ethnic symbol but, at the same time, is frequently resented because of its perceived lack of utilitarian value” (2002: 488). For those who were denied the chance to acquire their language in childhood, there is often a powerful drive to learn it as an adult. However, in terms of provision for this education, questions of access and pedagogy arise<sup>7</sup>. In the education system in Ireland, an emphasis on grammatical accuracy for examinations at the expense of conversational fluency has alienated many people from their language, leading to frustration and anger<sup>8</sup>.

John Waters reflects on the post-colonial confusion surrounding the relationship that many people have with the Irish language:

[Our attitude to Irish is one of] the scheduled outcome of a systematic programme of suppression. We are not simply indifferent to the language, but have a programmed antipathy to it that expresses itself as much in our elaborate shows of tokenistic esteem for Irish as in our repeated failure to make it part of our active culture. (Waters, 2006)

The journalist Salini Sinha, a newcomer to Ireland, has also noted this bi-polar attitude, and, writing about the facility of immigrants in acquiring new languages, cautions, “do not demand it [learning Irish] of us until you choose to speak it yourself, for we [immigrants] can bring enthusiasm and ability, but we cannot make you have pride” (Sinha, 2005)<sup>9</sup>. These extreme attitudes are usually held by people who have not had the opportunity to speak the language in a family setting, but rather were first and exclusively exposed to it in school, and regret their failure to acquire it naturally. However, the ability to speak the language is not always a prerequisite in identifying with it on an imaginative level. There are also many people who, according to the Minister for the Gaeltacht (2002-10) Éamon Ó Cuív, although not fluent in Irish, “have the same love of the language and who feel the same ownership of it [as fluent speakers do]” (Ó Cuív, 2003 quoted in Mac Giolla Chríost, 2005: 191).



The issue of ability in te reo (understood by some to demonstrate the essence of one's cultural authenticity) and Māori identity is very sensitive. Indeed, Joe Te Rito holds that 'fluency' should be understood in a more nuanced way in the context of any minoritised language (interview 2006)<sup>10</sup>. Mahuika speaks of a fine line between acceptance by different cultural groups in New Zealand, and the danger of falling between the two: "a person could become too Māori for mainstream, and not Māori enough for Kaupapa Māori" (Mahuika, 2008). However, younger Māori have less of a tie to te reo as a marker of identity (Ngaha, 2005). This is an interesting development, as in Ngaha's study, older respondents consistently invoked te reo as a central pou [pillar] of their Māori identity. It is likely that more of the older group had heard the language spoken 'naturally' when they were young, whereas the younger group were more likely to have been exposed to te reo outside the whānau or marae setting, and thus in an environment which was not so connected to their sense of self. There is, of course, a distinction to be made between somebody who learns the language for identity or political reasons, and somebody who has acquired the language naturally as a child growing up. For a natural speaker, the language is an integral part of being. Timoti Kāretu (former Māori Language Commissioner at Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori) speaks of his personal sense of identity as completely bound up in language, "Without [te reo], how can you know how I think and how I feel?... The language has given me what mana I have, and it is the only thing which differentiates me from anyone else" (1993: 224, 226). Similarly, Irish radio broadcaster Rónán Mac Aodha Bhuí says: "The language means everything to me. It's an expression of who I am and it enriches my life in every way" (Mac Aodha Bhuí, 2010, in Butler, 2010). For the natural speaker, the language is a given; for the learner, it is always a conscious decision, implying the refusal to use another language, usually that of the coloniser. The nationalist speaker (somebody who uses the language consciously for political reasons) operates in a place where language and tikanga have become disconnected, no matter how much work is done to draw them together<sup>11</sup>.

Amongst some (often non-native speakers) from the indigenous group, there can be an added element to the identification with the language, and this is an understanding that a distinct language may demand a distinct political or societal structure. O'Reilly notes that language can be reified and distanced from normal use in order to further political ends: "As a factor in ethnocultural identity, language is often used as a proxy for political struggle" (2003: 22). This is especially true of languages minoritised through political injustice. Ó Mianáin, for example, takes pride in his use of Irish, equating it with a refusal to bow to imperial coercion:

not only is Irish, then, a sign of casting off the cultural shackles of colonisation, but it is also a direct V-sign to the extent that despite the odds, the natives have not all been 'civilised'. In effect, every person who speaks Irish bears witness to the failure of centuries of cultural cleansing. (Ó Mianáin, 2004: 115)

The coupling of a language to a broader cultural or political project such as nationalism problematises its relation to natural speakers, who use it as a normal means of communication without overt regard to ideology<sup>12</sup>. However, it is important to note that in both Ireland and New

Zealand, the language revival movements were led mainly by language-learners because they were the ones who actively sought to reclaim their heritage. Corcoran, for instance, notes, following Hindley (1990: 253) that the Irish language even today provides some learners with “a sense of completeness, of oneness with Ireland’s historic and cultural traditions which they cannot experience elsewhere”, i.e. outside the Gaeltacht (Corcoran, 1994: 62).

There are four groups implicated in the fortunes of a minority language: natural speakers, nationalist speakers or learners, neutral or ‘receptive’ people, and those who are inimical to the language, whether for personal, identity or political reasons. It is possible for people to have a foot in many camps, depending on the circumstance. Whilst public attitudes towards the indigenous minority language have improved in the past few decades (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2006; McGreil & Rhatigan, 2009), a positive attitude towards the language does not, as might be expected, always translate into the will to use it<sup>13</sup>. A generous amount of time and space is needed to recover the indigenous language after its traumatic loss. The difficulty in re-establishing a link with the language is underlined by Ó Tuama’s point that: “Is é an ní is deacra ar domhan d’aon chine ná scaradh lena dúchas” [The hardest thing in the world for people is to break with their tradition] (Ó Tuama, 1972: 7). The recovered language will not be the same as what it once was, because continuity has been broken. Joshua Fishman’s comment sums up the situation “Reversing Language Shift... implies remaking social reality and that is very hard for minorities to do” (1991: 411)<sup>14</sup>. The following section looks at how te reo and Irish speakers have been attempting to ‘remake social reality’ after a history of language loss.

## **2 History of Language Loss and Resurgence**

An obvious point of difference between Ireland and New Zealand is the relationship between the indigenous minority language and the state. This is because each country has had a different experience of colonisation. In Ireland, the majority are native, although they do not all speak the indigenous language, whereas in New Zealand the majority are descendents of anglophone settlers, and the Māori people are now a minority<sup>15</sup>. In both places, however, historical rupture in the chain of intergenerational transmission (parents speaking the language to their children) has occurred, followed many years later by varying degrees of State intervention to preserve the language. State action has arisen sometimes in response to and sometimes in spite of the wishes of the people, affecting the education system, public administration and media services<sup>16</sup>. This section traces the history which led to a gap between the official recognition of each indigenous language and its actual use in daily life.

The pattern of indigenous language loss through colonisation, although it occurred over different timescales, is similar in both countries. After initial contact with the British colonisers and through the imposition of an imperial education system, both te reo and an Ghaeilge began to lose their

place to English as the language of commerce and modernity. Direct prohibition and indirect status shift lead to many Māori and Irish people gradually starting to speak English in the home to their children, thus breaking the chain of inter-generational transmission. This practice was born of factors ranging from internalised cultural inferiority and shame, to the practical economic considerations of a marginalised people (employment was more likely for those who spoke English well). When the position of the languages as living vernaculars appeared most in danger, scholars took an academic and cultural interest in ‘preserving’ some of the oral tradition. ‘Revival’ movements were begun, mainly by people who had a strong cultural standing in the anglophone world as well as heritage in their indigenous culture. In Ireland following political independence, the language cause lost something of its urgency, and decades of delusion and pretence regarding the actual use of Irish ensued. The Gaeltachtaí [Irish-speaking areas] acted in some measure as reservations, where the ‘authentic’ national culture could be safely preserved. In New Zealand, te reo Māori remained a marginal minority interest in national terms, even as interest in reclaiming their language grew amongst Māori people.

## **2.1 History of te reo Māori/ the Māori Language**

Te reo Māori belongs to the Polynesian family of languages, and is related to Hawai’ian, Niuean, Samoan, Tongan and Rapanui. Settlers from Eastern Polynesia are thought to have arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand between 800 and 1300 AD, where their language continued to develop.

There is a strong oral tradition in te ao Māori [the Māori world], where knowledge and customs were passed on from one generation to the next by means of waiata, haka, whaikōrero, pepeha and other oral forms (Kāretu, 1992: 28). The importance of verbatim reproduction, common to oral cultures, is underlined in Māori culture by the acceptance that a mistake in a recitation was aituā [bad omen, terrible thing] and might result in death. Values and the social code were woven into stories and transmitted through myth and legend (Sadler, 2007)<sup>17</sup>. A deep understanding of te ao Māori, its tikanga and whakapapa was necessary to fully appreciate and interpret these stories. These interpretative skills were lacking in the Europeans who arrived in the nineteenth century. The Māori tradition of allowing people to learn from their own mistakes (kaumātua usually correct the younger people in an indirect manner, not telling them outright what is right or wrong, but relying on their coming to the realisation themselves) was not understood by settlers from European traditions, and so many stories and customs were compromised and the language weakened.

Although Māori had no formal written language, symbolic communication was effected through art, carving and weaving. When the first Europeans came to the country, the concepts of writing and translation were introduced. The missionary schools (1816 until mid-1840s) taught in te reo. Māori people took to literacy avidly, and taught one another, so that proportionally more Māori than

European people in New Zealand were able to read and write (Bell, 2005: 13). May (2004) remarks that Māori people initially saw the schools as a complement to their own learning. However, from the 1840s onwards, as the influence of the settlers grew, Māori take-up of European education in the form of the Native Schools was regarded as a defensive tactic. In the early decades of European settlement, a knowledge of te reo was essential for survival, but as the numbers of immigrants increased, English became dominant. This resulted in a loss of status for te reo. The 1847 Education Ordinance Act allowed state funding only to schools which taught through English (May, 2004: 25), which further diminished the standing of te reo in public life. Such a process, where the language is present only in domains without power or prestige (Crystal, 2000: 83), is known as the “folklorisation” of a language (Fishman, 1987). Whilst te reo lost status in ‘mainstream’ culture, the prestige of the marae [meeting house] remained paramount.

The fate of a language with a small number of speakers often relies on its status or use in the institutions of the state. Apart from the legislature and public service, an institution with a major influence on daily speech habits of a population is the education system. One of the reasons for the decline of the language was its status in New Zealand education. The aim of the schools was to assimilate Māori people into the European-style society (usually to work at menial tasks – the future also envisioned for many Pākehā children at the time). Even though te reo was spoken at home by many people, literacy was no longer taught, and its status declined. In 1913 90% of Maori schoolchildren could speak te reo; in 1953 the figure had dropped to 26%, and by 1975 it was less than 5% (Biggs, 1986).

Although there was no official policy of te reo being forbidden in schools, there is strong evidence from the oral tradition about physical chastisement and psychological punishment for speaking Māori instead of English on the school premises (Maui, 2007; Browne, 2005: 87). This is of a piece with the experience of colonial education in other countries run by the British Empire. And, as was the case in those other places, the privileging of the imperial language at the expense of the original resulted in a generation of people who saw their own language as backward and useless in the modern world. Wanting their children to have better prospects, parents spoke only English to them. This resulted in miscommunication and a loss of continuity between family members. The new generation grew up knowing they were missing something, but not quite sure whether it was worth retrieving. Nevertheless, until World War II, most Māori people spoke te reo as their first language (Ministry for Culture and Heritage/ Te Manatū Taonga, n.d.).

After World War II, there was a significant migration of Māori people to urban areas in search of work, which broke up family networks and removed the language from its traditional environment. Before the war, about 75% of Maori lived in rural areas. Two decades later, approximately 60% lived in urban centres, and by 1981, it was about 80% (Bell, 2005). Te reo, thus removed from its

natural habitat, struggled and by the 1980s less than 20% of Maori knew enough te reo to be regarded as native or natural speakers. The practice of 'pepper-potting' (housing Māori families away from one another) was designed to speed up integration, but it also resulted in strengthening the use of English as a lingua franca, and diminishing the 'usefulness' of te reo Māori in daily interchange. Te reo therefore fell into disuse amongst many groups as a language of ordinary communication, and became something set aside, only to be used on special occasions such as religious ceremonies or important gatherings.

During the 1970s, there was a revival of pride in the Māori identity, so long sidelined by the hegemony of the State. This was in line with other local or indigenous movements around the western world. Linked to this resurgence in cultural identity was a recognition of the centrality of the language. From the urban centres came a new generation of Māori people who wished to regain the language and customs of their forebears. Activism began around issues of land reclamation and language revival in the context of civil rights and Treaty rights. In 1973, the student group Ngā Tamatoa [the young warriors] (against the wishes of some kaumātua who preferred a more subtle approach) marched to Parliament to deliver a 30,000-signature petition, asking for the language to be available as a subject in all schools "as a gift to the Pakeha [sic] from the Maori [sic]... [and] as a positive effort to promote a more meaningful concept of integration" (The 1972 petition, 2003: 2, quoted in Te Rito, 2008).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, important steps were taken by community groups, putting the government on the back foot (Murray, 2008: 12). In the effort to recreate an environment congenial to intergenerational transmission and early fluency, as children acquire language with less apparent effort than do adults (Ellis, 1995), kōhanga reo (Māori immersion pre-schools) were set up. This was also a move to counter poor results and retention rates of Māori students in national schools. The first officially bilingual school in New Zealand was opened in 1978 (Rūātoki in the Ureweras), and the first kōhanga reo began in Waiwhetū (Lower Hutt, Wellington) in 1982. This was done voluntarily, with few resources, parents taking an active part in the running of the kōhanga, and paying fees for each child attending. (Minimal) government funding came only after there were about 100 schools established. Apart from the linguistic aspect, the kōhanga are designed to nurture a holistic ao Māori environment, where the parties interact as members of a whānau [family] (Smith, 1993: 219). The initiative has been largely successful, with 690 kōhanga reo in operation by 2000, with about 40,000 children having passed through them (Bell, 2005: 58). It was soon noticed that in order to maintain fluency, support would be required beyond pre-school age. Kura kaupapa (Māori language primary schools) began in 1984, and eventually wānanga (Māori tertiary educational institutions) were set up. By 1989, an Education Amendment Act had been passed which recognised and promoted kura kaupapa and wānanga. The development of Māori-medium education is, according to May, "both a product and an illustration of a wider

repositioning of identity and minority rights issues” (May, 2004: 21). From the Māori point of view, it was an assertion of autonomy, as Taima Moeke-Pickering points out, following James Ritchie: “These initiatives served as a base in which Maori could assert their Maori teachings in effect, maintaining continuity of their cultural distinctiveness and identities that were uniquely Maori” (Moeke-Pickering, 1996: 7). Developments such as these contributed to a greater sense of pride and confidence among Māori people (Walker, 1989).

In 1985, a claim was made by Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i Te Reo Incorporated (the Wellington Māori Language Board) to the Waitangi Tribunal<sup>18</sup>, asserting that te reo Māori was a taonga (treasure), and as such, demanded Crown protection under Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi. Calling for Crown recognition of te reo Māori, particularly in the areas of broadcasting, education, health, and the public service, the claimants argued for linguistic diversity and cultural ecology, using the whakataukī (proverb): “Ka ngaro te reo, ka ngaro tāua, pērā i te ngaro o te moa” [If the language be lost, we will be lost, gone the way of the moa]. Surveys carried out by the Maori Unit of the Council for Educational Research to investigate why the language had declined so rapidly since the 1950s showed that the lack of support for te reo in public life was a major contributing factor. As Benton expressed it,

[L]anguage is first and foremost a social phenomenon. Languages do not flourish in a social vacuum and they are learned and established most effectively through use in a wide variety of contexts” (Waitangi Tribunal, 1989: section 3.3.4)

Although elements of Māori culture were visible in mainstream New Zealand society, it was on a tokenistic basis. Ironically, the position of the language and its associated culture as symbolic and redolent of national identity was secure, even as it was denied a place in daily life as a normal medium of communication. Fishman is scathing about this use of Māori language and culture as “a ceremonial appendage to White society, culture and institutions” (Fishman, 1991: 235-6). Examples put forward in the Waitangi Tribunal hearings included the koru (Air New Zealand), the New Zealand national coat-of-arms, and the All Blacks haka (composed by Te Rauparaha). The submission to the Tribunal was that it was “intolerable” that Māoritanga should be so used for national cultural identity and tourism, whilst its use in the community was not afforded proper safeguards (Waitangi Tribunal, 1989: section 3.5.3).

The Tribunal interpreted the Treaty of Waitangi as “directed to ensuring a place for two peoples in this country” (Waitangi Tribunal, 1989: section 4.2.8), and noted that a people could only enjoy proper esteem when their language was given the same. The Te Reo Māori Claim (Wai 11) was agreed to in 1986, when the Waitangi Tribunal’s Te Reo Māori Report, produced after a month’s consideration, recommended a variety of legislative and policy remedies, one of which was that “active steps” should be taken so that the Māori could have “the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their language and culture” (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986: 29). Following these

recommendations, the Māori Language Act was passed in 1987, making the language official. The Act also established Te Kōmihana mō te Reo Māori, now known as Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (The Māori Language Commission), a body closely modelled on the Irish body Bord na Gaeilge<sup>19</sup>, but with more limited staff and resources (May, 2001: 293).

The government vision for 2028 is that te reo be “widely spoken” by Māori people (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2003: 5). Recent surveys by Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK, The Ministry of Māori Development) demonstrate the continuing positive influence of early immersion education on intergenerational transmission (although their survey sample is limited), finding that the number of adults who used te reo as a significant language of communication with their preschoolers rose from 18% to 30% in five years (2001-2006) (TPK, 2007: 7). This is encouraging given that the percentage of fluent speakers in the 1970s was less than 20% - about 3% of the general population (Benton, 1979). The place of te reo in contemporary life was reasserted in 2008 by the launch of a Maori language version of Google, and the publication by Te Taura Whiri of a monolingual dictionary, He Pātaka Kupu.

## **2.2 History of an Ghaeilge/ the Irish language**

The Irish language (an Ghaeilge) comes from the Celtic family of languages, along with Scots Gaelic, Breton, Welsh, Cornish and Manx.<sup>20</sup> The earliest record of the Irish language is around 300BC, making it the one of the oldest continuous vernaculars in Europe. Ogham lines were used as a form of writing until the Roman alphabet was adopted with the coming of Christianity to Ireland in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Waves of settlers and invaders saw Norse, Latin, Spanish, French, Anglo-Norman and English terms enter the Irish language, although the grammatical structure and idiom remained distinctively Celtic. Béaloideas (the oral tradition) operated through druidic and bardic schools, and frequent public performances. Poets were the living archives of their tribe, and those of a high level were also composers of new material. The tradition of peripatetic composers remained continuous at least until the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Expropriation of land by force, followed over the coming centuries by ‘plantations’ (forced dispossession and settlement), massacres, slavery, famine and deportation, led to a weakening of the Gaelic system in Ireland. English legal measures such as the Statutes of Kilkenny (1367) made it a crime to live according to Gaelic cultural norms. Cromwell’s notorious invasion and plundering of the land in the 17<sup>th</sup> century led to a clustering of the native Irish survivors on the western seaboard. He also instigated the Penal Laws, which discriminated against the native people mainly on the basis of their religion. By the last quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century, only around 20% of the population were returned in the Census as Irish speakers (Ó hÉallaithe, 2004: 162).

Colonialism damaged the habitat of the language. The National School system began under British rule in 1831, and as the language of instruction was English, many Irish speakers grew to regard

their language as hopelessly obsolescent. Within three generations, the population of the country turned from primarily Irish- to primarily English-speaking. Because this change was effected by the people as well as through British intervention, there remain strong traces of Irish in the English spoken, even today (pronunciation, idiom, direct translation). This way of speaking, sometimes referred to as Hiberno-English, became beloved of the literati in the late nineteenth century, who saw in it poetic possibilities lost from a banalised English. This mirrored an academic interest in the legends and lore of what was seen as a dying civilisation. The Ascendancy (landed gentry of Anglo origin) love of dialect had the result of preserving oral traditions, but also of fossilising them.

The Famine in the late 1840s resulted in a great loss of people; two million are estimated to have died from hunger or disease and a further two million to have emigrated from economic necessity. This effectively halved the population of the country. As the poorer western coastal districts were the worst affected, and this was also the area where most Irish-speakers lived, the language suffered greatly. Because of its traumatic loss by so many people, the Irish language was viewed with mixed feelings. Some loved the romantic notion of reviving a glorious past, whereas others feared accusations of backwardness and thought its acquisition or use would detract from their ability in English. As time passed, the language became associated with rural areas and republicanism, although major nationalist social movements and the church used English (Coleman, 2003: 178). In general, Irish was seen as irrelevant or indeed inimical to social mobility.

Conradh na Gaeilge [the Gaelic League], founded in 1893, attracted nationalists and those with an interest in Irish literature and culture. Conradh na Gaeilge provided hope that there was a future in the language, and this inspired the leaders of the 1916 Rising (Coleman, 2003: 179)<sup>21</sup>. It was one of several organisations referred to by Bradley as "gluaiseachtaí féinmhuiníneacha" [self-respect movements] (Ó Brolacháin, quoted in Ó Muirí, 2009), whose idealistic legacy remains. The dynamic image of an Irish-speaking Ireland created by the Gaelic League proved popular, (although to a large extent it ignored the Gaeltachtaí (Ó Tuama, 1972: 19), and by 1904 there were 600 branches with 50,000 members (Hindley, 1990: 24). Since its foundation the Gaelic League has seen the restoration of the Irish language as fundamental to the preservation and development of national identity.

Many independence movements rose and fell between the 18th and 20th century, until a symbolic victory was struck in 1916, with the declaration of the Republic. The 1918 provisional government appointed a Minister for Language, but little was achieved due to the subsequent War of Independence. This war ended in 1922 after a Treaty with Britain (enabling a form of dominion status) was signed. However, almost half of the provisional government rejected the Treaty. Although the Irish Free State was established in 1922, Civil War ensued (June 1922- May 1923). In January 1923, the Minister for Education Eoin Mac Néill announced through newspapers that Irish



was to be a standard subject for civil service exams<sup>22</sup>. Irish was regarded as part of symbolic national identity, linked to separatism and the new State (Ó Murchú, 2002: 476-7). Several issues, however, complicated the introduction of the language to schools on a sound basis, including war, land agitation and political change<sup>23</sup>.

The Gaeltachtaí were considered important to the new State in preserving the demotic language, but despite goodwill, there was not enough real support. Even at the time, the danger of using one group as a repository for 'authenticity' was recognised: "I fear we have been exploiting an impoverished people too much for the glory of having a Gaeltacht" (Ó Muirthuile, 1925, quoted in Walsh, 2002: 131). In 1925 the Irish Free State set up Coimisiún na Gaeltachta [Gaeltacht Commission] which made Irish fluency obligatory for all senior civil servants dealing with the Gaeltacht, and recommended economic development and improved education for the regions. Although the state professed goodwill towards the native language and its best speakers, the Gaeltacht areas remained neglected. Their geographical isolation made it more difficult to implement policies which could have helped. For example, when plans were first mooted for a Gaeltacht radio station in the first half of the twentieth century, Taoiseach [head of government] DeValera was advised that only 10% of houses there had radios (Delap, 2006). In the early 1930s, the pressure group Muintir na Gaeltachta [The People of the Gaeltacht] was established to demand that the government make a greater effort to act on their policies. They had a degree of success in achieving recognition, as well as the resettlement of some Gaeltacht families to better land.

At the time of the unilateral proclamation of independence in 1937, 23.7% of the population could speak Irish (Ó hÉallaithe, 2004: 173). In the same year, the Constitution claimed Irish as the first national language, and although it was declining as a community language, it maintained its place on official occasions and in schools. In the 1950s, an attempt was made to standardise the language ("an caighdeán" [the standard]<sup>24</sup>), as the three main dialects were quite different, and some spellings archaic. Although the language had great prestige and lipservice was paid to it in that it was used as a political marker at the beginning and ends of speeches, and was necessary for State jobs such as the civil service, teaching and An Garda Síochána [police force], it was nevertheless something of a national 'sacred cow'. Fishman evinces astonishment at "the penchant of the [Irish] politicians for tokenism" in relation to Irish (1991: 141). Similarly, few people who lived outside the Gaeltacht strongholds actually used the language in their daily lives. McCloskey holds that the state effort to revive the language put the most pressure on anglophone children, "acting as proxies for or instruments of... forces" much larger than they (McCloskey, 2008: 83). On the other hand, native speakers were also poorly served by a national curriculum which did not differentiate between the differing linguistic abilities of the population.

In the 1960s and 70s activism flowered, both in Northern Ireland, where nationalists sought civil rights, and in the Gaeltacht of Conamara, where a group led by professor and writer Máirtín Ó Cadhain attacked the government for its lack of investment in the apparently 'authentic' Ireland of the western seaboard. While admired for its culture and picturesque scenery, the region was not targeted for economic development, and the Gaeltacht communities were losing the Irish language as they lost their people to other towns in Ireland or indeed to emigration. In 1966, the group Misneach [courage] held a week-long hunger strike in Belfast and Dublin to protest at the failure of the government to implement the socialist ideals of the 1916 Rising (Mac Giolla Chríost, 2008: 81). It should be noted that much of the impetus for change came from the Gaeltacht (Ó Gadhra, 1988). As well as employment and education, an important part of the campaign was to set up broadcast media in the Irish language. National television (RTÉ) had begun in 1961, but operated mostly in English.

Around the same time, a movement began amongst people in non-Irish-speaking areas to reclaim the language for their children. In Shaw's Road, Belfast, an urban 'Gaeltacht' was created (Maguire, 1991). Naíonraí [Irish-language immersion nursery schools] began in the late 1960s, and in 1973, an Choiste Náisiúnta na Scoileanna LánGhaeilge [the Committee for Irish-medium Schools] was founded<sup>25</sup>. Gaelscoileanna Teo., as it is now known, is a not-for-profit organisation which promotes and supports Irish medium education throughout the country. From 1978, it has received funding from Bord/Foras na Gaeilge. The gaelscoil movement actively encourages parents and communities in the development and foundation of new schools<sup>26</sup>. It also provides in-service training for teachers. Where parental interest is strong enough to create a school, the State tends to support them, although recognition may take time.

By the 1990s, attitudes had changed radically. There was a general revival of pride in Irish identity, and attention moved away from the political sphere into that of the cultural. The success of the soccer team in the World Cup Italia '90, the beginning of the Northern Ireland Peace Process, and an increase in international artistic success (Riverdance, etc.) brought Irish people to a more peaceful relationship with their heritage. There is a common desire in the larger European Union to rediscover particular and regional identity, or what O'Reilly terms "trendy tradition", which is linked to alternative and left-wing politics in the European context (O'Reilly, 2003: 24), and in 2007, the Irish language was finally recognised as an official language of the EU. Immigration means that, particularly in areas of dense population, it is now common to hear a variety of languages in colloquial use in daily life. In a context where Russian, Polish, Chinese and other languages are spoken freely on public transport, the position of Irish becomes normalised. This is true across social classes and is most marked in Dublin and Belfast cities, neither of which would be a traditional bastion of Irish-speakers.

Although the existence of the language outside the Gaeltacht is “mainly due to State support” (Watson, 2003: 10), its flourishing is mainly due to community interest<sup>27</sup>. Perhaps the biggest difference between state-led and community-led initiatives is their potential for growth and success. The postcolonial distrust of authority turns into community co-operation and a sense of local pride. What we see now is a better organised and State-supported return to the position in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, where local ambition and communicative and social activities took precedence. As Devlin explains, language revival cannot be achieved purely through the machinery of state or large-scale public institutions – it is “a debate in the mind and the heart and a spiritual option” (1972: 97). However, it was not until the closing decades of the twentieth century that effective grassroots activism began to effect progress in language policy in both Ireland and New Zealand.

### **3 Language Development and the state**

François Grin, language economist and co-ordinator of the EU DYLAN (Dynamics of Language and Diversity Management) research programme, points out that language use depends on three factors: competence/ ability in the language, a suitable situation in which to use the language, and the will to speak the language (Grin, 2002). These factors (ability, opportunity and will) are referred to throughout this section. We have seen in section 1 that although many people in Ireland claim to have the competence to speak the minority language, they appear to lack the will to use it. It is also true that environments in which the use of Irish is ‘normal’ are quite rare. In New Zealand, similar challenges apply. For many years, competence in te reo Māori has been the preserve of a few, as the image or status of the language was poor in the eyes of the majority of the population. Whilst intergenerational transmission and education can increase the number of competent speakers, it requires larger-scale community action and/or state support to create environments where the language may be normally used. Perhaps the most elusive factor in terms of external support is Grin’s third condition, the will to use the language, as it resides in the hearts and feelings of the language-speakers and learners. This section examines the role of the state in assisting language communities to attain these three conditions.

Linguistic diversity was largely overlooked by political scientists until the twentieth-first century, so there is a paucity of scholarly material on language rights and policy in general, despite many publications on the linguistic politics of particular states. Most frequently invoked in these writings are models of nation-building and language-preservation (Myhill, 1999), but Kymlicka and Patten (2003) consider these insufficient preparation for framing a normative theory of language rights. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, post-colonial attitudes to language are intertwined with issues of nation, identity and belonging. As “linguistic diversity complicates attempts to build stable and

cohesive forms of political community” (Kymlicka & Patten, 2003: 1), this is an issue which the nation-state cannot afford to ignore.

Any claim for indigenous national language use or development engages with a set of power relations between speakers and state. In post-colonial states, it must be recognised that the dominant status of one language variety over another does not come about by a means of natural selection. After a long process of legitimation and institutionalisation the privileged position of the coloniser’s language comes to appear normal to many. People forget that this is an arbitrary situation, and are blind to what is in essence sociolinguistic cannibalism, where “[s]peakers of the dominant language are immediately placed at an advantage in both accessing and benefiting from the civic culture of the nation-state” (May, 2001: 152). Stephen May, drawing on Bourdieu, holds that speakers of ‘lesser’ languages “come to accept this diminution as legitimate” (2001: 153). Bourdieu (1991: 140) argues that where such a misrecognition of the relative status of the languages in question is accepted as natural rather than seen a political construction, then ‘symbolic violence’ occurs. In his formulation, the subjugated group is complicit in this symbolic violence - or at least must consent to it. However, free consent to cultural change has not been a luxury afforded to many indigenous people. Colonisation and its aftermath have led to “the enforced loss of [native peoples’] own ethnic, cultural and linguistic habitus as the necessary price of entry to the civic realm of the nation-state” (May, 2001: 310). In effect, in order to live a full and active civic life in such countries, fluency in the majority language and culture is essential. The effects of the shift from one language to another continue to cause distress for minority group individuals, communities and the larger polity in which they live. Writers have commented on the sense of displacement consequent to the experience of colonisation in New Zealand (Browne, 1996; Walker, 2004) and in Ireland (Nic Eoin, 2005; Sinha, 2005). In some cases, the colonised come to reject their own specificity, taking on, as John Waters has it, “a deep and abiding hatred of those aspects of ourselves which are unapologetically Irish” (1997).

However, the annihilation of diversity is not necessarily a sine qua non of forming a country, and despite the trauma of past injustice, there are possibilities for building new relationships within. Homi Bhabha (1994) argues that the nation-state can be reimagined in order to allow room for different cultures, which are understood to be dynamic and unbounded. Such a theory is complicated in practice by layers of historical context and resultant contemporary power relations. However, according to Alison Jones, it is not necessary that these tensions be fully resolved (2007). It is more important that differing parties get a respectful hearing than that a ‘solution’ be imposed which satisfies neither.

Grin and Vaillancourt (1998) drew up four conditions for an effective language policy, which were used as the basis for the plans of Te Puni Kōkiri/ The Ministry of Māori Development. These are: re-

distribution of funds to where they are needed, technical effectiveness, individual maintenance (use of the language in a broad range of contexts) and normalcy (that the public accept language change as a legitimate goal). The last condition, normalcy, is probably the most problematic in both New Zealand and Ireland, as the majority of the population is satisfied with using English and is not motivated to become fully bilingual. However, action from the minority is an effective lever in triggering linguistic change.

Most successful initiatives in language development in recent times involve communities or interest groups proposing and implementing new ideas, to which (after initial reluctance) the state responds. Examples of this in New Zealand and Ireland are *kōhanga reo*, *gaelscoileanna*, and the television stations Māori Television and TG4. Such initiatives work, as Tollefson has it, “to legitimise the minority group itself and to alter its relationship to the state. Thus while language planning reflects relationships of power, it can also be used to transform them” (Tollefson, 1991: 202, quoted in May, 2008: 164). The term ‘legitimise’ is loaded, but here I take it to refer to a majority perspective on the minority culture. Once the state has recognised and approved institutions originating from the indigenous minority, these initiatives are valorised in the eyes of the outsiders. A new balance emerges, where innovative ideas from the smaller group may eventually result in a supportive response from the state.

### **3.1 Language planning**

The role of the state in language planning is contested. Arguments against state involvement range from the economic to the pragmatic. People object to the creation of what they regard as an artificial need for fluency in a useless language, and even those who support the language may doubt the efficacy of state intervention to make much difference. Ó Riagáin (1997: 170) and others have commented on the complex social, political and economic circumstances which, although having a powerful effect on language use, seem to be beyond the ambit of state language policy<sup>28</sup>. States accustomed to operating in one standardised majority language fear getting lost in a linguistic landscape of unwieldy dialectal difference. Some also claim that to encourage language revival is to underline civil or ethnic divisions, adding fuel to the fire of those who seek political concessions. In a summary of the literature against state-assisted language development, May dismisses such arguments as paper tigers. He argues that cultural nationalism is not a regressive search for the unattainable past or a desire for complete political sovereignty, but rather the wish for “greater control and self-regulation [in reconstructing] the process of cultural and linguistic change” (May, 2001: 148). The link between language and politics became snarled in the case of Ireland. Although the drive to independence grew from a renaissance of pride in language and culture, once political independence was achieved, the language became, for most citizens, no more than a symbolic appendage. However, in the case of New Zealand, where Māori people do not have their own state, the Māori language is often considered to be an integral feature of the wider

political goal of self-determination or tino rangatiratanga, which is variously figured as cultural, social and/or political autonomy.

Arguments in favour of government intervention in language often begin with a focus on cultural identity in the service of the people (link to past) and of the state (peace born of respecting diversity). The added value an alternative language and culture may bring the country is put forward, as in the whakataukī, 'Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi' [With your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive]. Eco-linguistics or cultural ecology is another field which is often mined for metaphors supporting language diversity. Sociolinguist David Crystal notes, "the whole concept of the ecosystem is based on the insight that living entities exist through a network of interrelationships" (2002: 32). This is a notion familiar to Māori thought (whānaungatanga). All that we experience today as culture is born out of the mixing and interaction of past cultures. However, there are problems in relying too heavily on metaphors of life and death or indeed of evolution when talking about language shift and reclamation. As May remarks, these figures of speech "obscure the wider social and political forces at work in language loss" (2000: 3). Macdougall (2009) also makes the point that the biodiversity metaphor is flawed, as a predator suffers if there is no more prey, whereas a dominant language remains largely unaffected by the disappearance of its minority neighbour.

Today, it is not enough simply to say that linguistic diversity is desirable, for in the case of multi-cultural or multi-national states, it is imperative. This is particularly true of countries where a language was adversely affected by colonial actions (Kymlicka & Patten, 2003: 14). According to May, "the dominant ethnies, or Staatsvolk, has an *obligation of justice* to accept [minority language] rights" [emphasis in original] (2008: 195), and "external protections" are necessary as a shield against external forces (2008: 142). The most convincing argument for state involvement in language planning is therefore a moral one. The language was damaged as a result of rapid and radical alteration in an imposed rather than a natural process. As Michael Blake says, "the world has lost something important for no good reason" (2003: 211). Blake insists on the extension of this idea beyond the linguistic arena: "We can legitimately focus on the preservation of aboriginal language only as part of a package of responses designed to counter and repair the damages of colonisation" (2003: 223). The issue of language rights in New Zealand should thus be seen not as a separate matter, but rather considered as the "continuation of a long process of negotiation between autochthonous Māori and European settlers" (Spolsky, 2003: 553).

Of course, this argument is not without its complications. With their initial refusal to sign the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, countries like New Zealand and Australia made visible their strained attitudes towards reparation for colonial injustice<sup>29</sup>. Although justice demands action, it is not always easy to implement, as complex social and political agendas

underlie decisions on language policy. Blake recognises the dilemma legal protection causes for liberal democracy, a predicament both New Zealand and Ireland share. If affording official status to an indigenous language is a “remedial response to a past injustice” (Blake, 2003: 229), it is also illiberal, as it sets the minority language in a special position. However, to leave it to fade away would be unjust. The choice between liberalism and justice is messy, and the Irish State and the New Zealand Crown have sidestepped this problem in distinct ways. In Ireland, the language has been declared a national attribute, which makes it officially a majority interest, although of course in practice Irish is spoken by a minority (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000: 94). In New Zealand, te reo Māori is one element of many Māori taonga (guaranteed protection by the Treaty of Waitangi, which obliges partnership between Māori and Crown) which are recognised by the state, but not truly integrated into majority culture in a meaningful way. In neither country is the problem fully solved, but both have achieved a workable starting platform for future developments.

### **3.2 How can state language planning occur and what are its effects?**

After the initial issue of language rights has been addressed, the remaining (and more difficult) aim of language planning is to achieve “conversational equality” between the minority and the majority language (Barker, 1999), which means that both languages have equal weight and respect. As the context of language use comprises both public and private spheres, it is useful to consider the effect of State intervention in the two<sup>30</sup>. Obvious support in the public domain (e.g. education, courts, government departments, passports, road signage) may encourage increased use of the minority language in the private domain (e.g. informal social occasions), as the effect of seeing it used across different highly-visible domains can increase esteem for the language. In other words, provision of safe environments for language use (Grin’s condition 2) can lead to practice and increased competence (Grin’s condition 1) and these can encourage people to speak more (Grin’s condition 3). In addition, Rubio-Marín remarks that “some degree of public visibility is needed to enhance the capacity for empathy of the average citizen who may never have experienced linguistic exclusion himself or herself” (Rubio-Marín, 2003: 65). However, it is possible for the minority language to have a public ‘face’ which does not match its private one.

Whilst state action may enhance the public visibility of a minority language relatively easily, it is more difficult for the state to effectively encourage language use. One concern is that highly visible signage or bureaucratic bilingualism can act as a smokescreen for language problems in daily life at community level, where there is little practical support for parents trying to bring up their family through the minority language. Nettle and Romaine follow Fishman in remarking that affording status to a language rather than empowering its speakers is ineffective (Fishman, 1997: 194; Nettle & Romaine, 2000: 39-40). An over-emphasis on managing new terminology, or “galar an fhoclóireachais” [dictionary-itis] (Davitt, 1996: 3-4), leads to a distancing of the language from its

actual speakers, and is an affront to their linguistic autonomy and agency. An attendant over-concern with education and standardisation may calcify the language and reduce its appeal to learners and natural speakers alike. This is inimical to the realisation of Grin’s first and third conditions<sup>31</sup>. On the other hand, funding for media and community events, which associate the language with fun and energy, helps to promote a more attractive image, supporting Grin’s third condition for language use. The overwhelming task of effecting language shift from English to the indigenous language is not feasible in the short term, although with incremental progress in providing opportunities and environments in which speakers may use their language, bilingualism in some communities may occur in the longer term. In the meantime, matters to be addressed include the cultivation of respectful attitudes and encouragement of personal effort. Literature from Te Puni Kōkiri emphasises the importance of everyday efforts, and how apparently small things may have a positive ripple effect, arguing that “[s]peaking Māori is not an all or nothing affair, even correct pronunciation of the town one lives in is an indication of support for the Māori language” (Te Taura Whiri). It is important not to overly alienate the majority group of non-speakers either, as their attitude can have a strong impact on the acceptance of the minority language as ‘useable’ (Romaine, 2007).

### 3.3 State approaches to national indigenous minority language policy

According to Kymlicka and Patten (2003: 26), the relationship between state and minority language (speakers) fluctuates between two poles across four different areas. Here I represent their ideas in diagram form, placing the two countries of my study on the four continuums, and providing examples from New Zealand (NZ) and Ireland (I) to illustrate how the state acts in relation to the language. I also note where there appears to be consonance with Grin’s conditions for language use.

*tolerance vs promotion-oriented* (Grin’s conditions 1 [ability] and 3 [will])

tolerance-oriented-----NZ-----I-----promotion-oriented

Tolerance of linguistic practice means that minority groups may speak their language in the private domain without state involvement, whereas a promotional approach has the state making public gestures in support of the language. These gestures may include advertising campaigns or more substantial educational provision, amongst others. However, as Rubio-Marín points out, the apparently “positive action” of promotion knows several degrees of support (2003: 55). This is the greatest difference in policy between New Zealand and Ireland in relation to their respective indigenous languages. The modern New Zealand state has not overtly acted for or against te reo (although its lack of support causes in itself a form of negative effect). Te Puni Kōkiri, for example, argues that te reo “underpins Māori cultural development, which supports Māori social and economic development and contributes to a unique New Zealand identity” (TPK, 2007). The Irish state, on the other hand, has claimed Irish as a marker of national identity and culture and actively (if largely ineffectively) promoted the language in the education system. Both governments subvent



public (national, municipal and community) events to mark the place of the language in the life of the country. An interesting parallel is the annual week devoted to promoting the language, Seachtain na Gaeilge [Irish-language Week (which now actually lasts for a fortnight)] encompasses the national holiday, St Patrick's Day, traditionally a time for using the first national language; and Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori [Māori Language Week] similarly affords publicity and kudos to te reo in the public arena. During the promotional week, the public are encouraged to use simple phrases in the indigenous language, and it is made slightly more visible/ audible in the media. However, such short-term efforts are largely window-dressing. Why for example does the use of these phrases not persist throughout the year? Here we see the temporary solution to Grin's second condition - creating a suitable environment for language use - which is not continued due to an absence of the third, the will to speak the language. However, the hope of language promoters involved in such schemes is that each year, the occasion will grow (indeed, Māori Language Day has extended into a week) and that the previous year's words will be reawakened in the memories of the public.

*norm and accommodation vs official language rights (Grin's condition 3 [will])*

*norm and accommodation -----NZ I----- official language rights*

Although both countries have afforded official status to their indigenous minority language, neither have attained the ideal of "conversational equality". Whilst there is now a legal framework in both countries, the principles have yet to be put into effect. For example, a child from the minority language community may be obliged to stay in a hospital where medical staff cannot speak their language. This is a case where the practice of the language has outpaced its official status. At the alternative end of the scale, a 'norm and accommodation' approach means that the state would ensure a proportional number of minority language staff (or at least interpreters) are present in hospitals attended by minority language speakers. Over the 88 years since Independence, the Irish state paid lipservice to the idea of a primarily Irish-speaking nation. Despite Constitutional recognition and compulsory character of the Irish language in schools, in the 1990s there was still a poor showing by public bodies and government departments in relation to the use of Irish (Bord na Gaeilge, 1996: 76, quoted in Mac Giolla Chríost, 2005: 32). In the 2000s, there came a new élan, with the Official Languages Act 2003, which set up the role of An Coimisinéir Teanga [the Language Commissioner]. The aim of the act is to achieve "better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish", including provision of information to the public in bilingual form, use of Irish in the courts and Oireachtas [parliament and Senate], and the employment of "an adequate number of... staff" who are competent in Irish (Pobail, n.d.). A series of directives were signed by the then Minister for Rural, Community and Gaeltacht Affairs, Éamon Ó Cuív<sup>32</sup>, in October 2006 which require all public bodies to utilise the Irish language on their official answering and public address systems, all notepaper and office stationary, and to give it precedence on their public signage from 1st January 2009. However, this has yet to be fully implemented.

*personality vs territoriality regimes* (Grin's condition 2 [space])

personality-oriented-----NZ-----I----- territoriality-oriented

Unlike New Zealand, Ireland has officially-recognised areas or territories where the Irish language is seen to be the community language (the Gaeltacht). Although New Zealand does not define 'Māori-speaking areas', there is an understanding that certain places are home to good speakers, and that government interactions with those communities should endeavour to use te reo. In a personality-oriented regime, the state responds to individual citizens' requests in the minority language, without focusing on community usage in a geographical context. The Gaeltacht has been figured by the Irish state as a locus for idealisation and authenticity, a place where people live out tradition and converse in poetic Irish<sup>33</sup>. This can be seen as an attempt to meet Grin's second condition of providing a suitable setting in which to use the language, but in many ways, the idea was never fully realised. Although the idea of the Gaeltacht has its merits, many Irish people who lived outside its boundaries considered themselves 'off the hook' in terms of taking responsibility for language regeneration. It seemed to be enough that someone, somewhere was doing things properly, housing precious artefacts from the past which did not hold relevance to contemporary life. Alternately seen as a reservation and a shrinking utopia, the Gaeltacht carries more ideological baggage in relation to the Irish language than other areas in the country, and, as mentioned in section 1, enjoys a complex relationship with the government, whose base is on the other side of the country. As the Department responsible for the Gaeltacht expresses it, "Is cuid riachtanach d'oidhreacht bheo an Stáit agus acmhainn nádúrtha tábhachtach sa Ghaeltacht í an Ghaeilge.... The Irish language is a vital part of the living heritage of the State and an important natural resource in the Gaeltacht" (Pobail, n.d.).

In the early part of the twenty-first century, the Irish government took a new approach to the language, moving away from territoriality in favour of ecological and identity arguments. This ideological shift was helpful in bringing together language development agencies north and south of the border. In 1999 The North-South Language Body/ An Foras Teanga/ Tha Boord o Leid was founded, which oversees language development in all areas of the island of Ireland. The importance of the language is portrayed as transcending borders "tá buntábhacht ag baint [leis an nGaeilge]... d'fhéiniúlacht phobal na hÉireann agus d'oidhreacht dhomhanda / [Irish] is... of critical importance to the identity of the Irish people and to world heritage" (Ireland, 2006). After a past where the language was used as a divisive tool between political traditions or intellectual or social groups, the current approach is strongly inclusive. Minister Éamon Ó Cuív made this explicit in his speech at the launch of Plean 2028: "I would like to emphasise that the Irish language belongs to everyone in this country, from those who have very little Irish but who like to see words like 'Taoiseach', 'Tánaiste', etc. used, to those who are native speakers" (Ó Cuív, 2006). While this is positive in terms of language acceptance and image (Grin's condition 3), it is not in itself sufficient to result in a high degree of fluency among a majority of the population (condition 1). It is therefore significant that

the Irish government has also emphasised the importance of Irish as a community language, “Baineann an Ghaeilge leis an tír seo amháin mar theanga labhartha pobail... /As a spoken community language, Irish is unique to this country...” (Ireland, 2006). It is by family and community use that Grin’s first condition [ability] is realised, which will create potential for Grin’s second condition [space]. Ó Cuív also stresses the potential of urban-based communities to contribute, which is a new phenomenon:

[Cé] go mbeidh ról an-tábhachtach ag na Gaeltachtaí...tiocfaidh an borradh agus an fás a athróidh rudaí go buan ó na bailte agus na cathracha. Caithfidh an Ghaeilge athrú ó theanga pobail tuaithe go teanga atá inghlactha sa saol cathrach...[tá] sé thar a bheith tábhachtach go gcuirfear go mór leis an ngréasán pobail atá á thógáil timpeall thart ar naíonraí, Gaelscoileanna agus Gaelcholáistí sna cathracha. [[Even though] the Gaeltachtaí will have a very important role.. the impetus and growth that will fundamentally change things will come from the towns and the cities. Irish has to change from a rural community language to a language which is an accepted part of city life... it [is] extremely important to develop community networks which are forming around [Irish-medium education] in the towns. (Ó Cuív, 2009)

*individual vs collective rights* (Grin’s conditions 2 [space] and 3 [will])

individual rights-----I-----NZ-----collective rights

In Ireland, the language is officially declared to be the heritage of all, and although the Gaeltacht regions have special status, any citizen has the right to use Irish in dealings with the state (Pobail, n.d.). Planning occurs centrally, although there is consultation with Gaeltacht people and with voluntary interest groups. In New Zealand, the language is closely associated with Māori people, and certain dialects with particular iwi. Language planning therefore relies on input from iwi, who are seen as the experts in their mita [dialect] and in the best way to promote it. There are few non-Māori people who are fluent in te reo, although some may have positive attitudes to its being spoken by others (TPK, 2007: 7). Although community-led momentum has resulted in the greatest success so far, iwi-based initiatives cannot operate effectively without the financial support which is due for the redress of past injustice. Government support for the recovery of the Māori language in New Zealand has often been lukewarm, as te reo is still regarded by some Pākehā as a divisive issue.

### 3.4 Who is involved and why?

In both Ireland and New Zealand, several State departments and bodies, as well as multiple voluntary organisations, are involved in language maintenance. A comprehensive overview of the situation in Ireland is provided by Helen Ó Murchú (2008: 94-100). Recently, an umbrella body, Fóram na Gaeilge, has been formed in an attempt to streamline efforts to assist in the revival of Irish. The forum consists of the relevant Departments of State (the Department of Education and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs), and organisations with a central role in relation to the Irish Language, for example Foras na Gaeilge, Údarás na Gaeltachta, TG4, Raidió na Gaeltachta and the voluntary sector<sup>34</sup>. In New Zealand, a range of different agencies and bodies co-

operate to develop te reo Māori: the Ministry of Education, Te Taura Whiri, the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, Creative New Zealand, Toi Maori, the National Library of New Zealand, Te Puni Kōkiri, Te Māngai Pāho and Māori Television. This is not to mention the various iwi and community groups which also play a large role in promoting language development and use. Jo Mane remarks that so far there is a lack of connectivity between the Māori language initiatives, because their energies and attentions are directed primarily towards working in the field of language revival, leaving little time or resources for collaboration across initiatives (2009: 37). Indeed a multiplicity of agencies risks a ‘too many cooks’ scenario, as ideas for language revival may be duplicated - or different groups may tread on each other’s toes in the scramble for scarce resources. In an attempt to avoid this danger, Te Puni Kōkiri explicitly emphasise “ngā ngātahi” [connectivity] in the development of Te Ao Pāpāho Māori [Māori Broadcasting and E-media] strategy. In this way, Te Puni Kōkiri will complement other agencies working in the area. The objectives are long-term, focusing on supporting mīta through broadcasting in such as way as to strengthen intergenerational transmission, and “reflect[ing] and promot[ing] Māori culture, by facilitating opportunities for Māori to tell their own stories about their diverse realities and aspirations” (TPK, 2007: 2). Prominent in this document are references to the centrality of Māori language to the cultural identity not only of Māori, but also in its contribution to the national identity of New Zealand.

Whilst for obvious reasons, the state cannot be the sole actor in language development, the weight of its support is useful to local language activists. In New Zealand, it has been argued that it is up to Māori people alone to decide what to do with the language. One advantage of iwi responsibility for “restoring Māori language among Māori people... to ensure the sustainable and proper guardianship of te reo Māori” (TMP, 2009: 14) is its cultural integrity and local knowledge. However, Māori people do not deal with te reo in a vacuum. The current situation was brought about by a mixture of iwi and tauwiwi [foreigner] forces - the taonga became tarnished by contact with an overwhelming number of Pākehā. Therefore it would seem right that some Pākehā might also be involved in its restoration. Research by Tipene Chrisp of Te Puni Kōkiri shows that few Pākehā can speak or have an interest in learning Māori, so that their “major contribution... will come instead from the support that Pākehā can give for the creation of a positive linguistic environment” (2005). Indeed, the majority culture plays an important role in realising Grin’s second condition (creating a space in which the language may be used), which has a strong influence on the potential of the third (the will to speak the language).

Most effective advances in language development occur through community initiatives, and the role the state often takes is to respond to and build on these moves<sup>35</sup>. Mac Giolla Chríost holds that in places where native or fluent speech communities are dispersed, there is a greater “necessity for intervention that is community-based in terms of moral ownership, agenda-setting and action” (2005: 199). The current situation in both New Zealand and Ireland is one of partnership between

voluntary and community bodies and various departments of state<sup>36</sup>. In both cases, legislative recognition and protection of the indigenous language occurred only after decades of pressure from language activists. In New Zealand, the issue was framed as one of identity, but in fact it was because of the Treaty obligation that the Crown was obliged to act. Whilst the ideal of an Irish-speaking Ireland had faded away, the government was reluctant to make real-life commitment to the development of the national language, as to do so would move the matter out of the realm of heritage and identity and into economics. Irish scholar Máire Ní Annracháin comments on the way this shift in the majoritarian perception of minority interests and their relevance to other groups has led to increased self-confidence on the part of the minority:

Tá brí nua ag teangacha mionlaigh agus ag cultúir mhionlaigh ar fud an domhain.. ag bogadh ón múnla oidhreachta.. chuig múnla na gcearta daonna, agus an saibhriú domhanda a eascraíonn as mionghrúpa a éilíonn a gcearta agus a sheasann an fód in aghaidh ollchultúir an domhain. [A new meaning inheres in minority languages and minority cultures all over the world... as they move away from the heritage model.. to a model of human rights, [to] the enrichment of the world that results from a minority group demanding their rights and standing up for themselves against the overarching global culture] (Ní Annracháin, 1999: 24, cited in Nic Eoin, 2005: 17)

She sees a new energy arising from the use of this paradigm, where self-respect is prominent. Linked to this confidence is a stronger will to speak the language in various settings (Grin's condition 3). Articulation of soundly justified demands for language development pressures the state to work towards implementing the wishes of the group.

### **Current Plans - goal for 2028**

Ireland and New Zealand each have an ambitious plan to increase the number of speakers of their respective indigenous languages by 2028. The target in Ireland is to have 250,000 habitual Irish speakers in the country in that year (Ó Cuív, 2009; [www.plean2028.ie](http://www.plean2028.ie)). 'Plean2028' will support the cultural, economic and social welfare of the Gaeltacht, and promote the use of Irish elsewhere on the island (Pobail, 2008). In New Zealand, aside from a greater awareness and respect on the part of non-Māori, by 2028 te reo will "be widely spoken by Māori within their whānau, homes and communities" (Te Puni Kōkiri 2007: 3). Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) sets out their Māori Language Strategy in the form of five goals, one of which is to encourage the involvement of iwi, hapū and local communities in revitalising the language. Ngāi Tahu have already (in 2002) launched their own 25-year strategy, based on the work of Fishman (Mulholland, 2006: 161). The mention of the Gaeltacht and of iwi and hapū in their respective plans demonstrates that both countries see native speakers and family-like social networks as the fulcrum of language change. This is an important recognition of what has been achieved so far at grassroots level, representing a combination of Grin's second and third conditions for language use. Scholars agree that native language acquisition is best achieved in the home environment, and in New Zealand the focus is turning to examining ways in which the state might facilitate this<sup>37</sup>.

## **Te Rautaki Reo Māori**

Te Rautaki Reo Māori [the Māori Language Strategy] was jointly produced by Te Puni Kōkiri and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori in October 2003, with five goals to be achieved by 2028. The ‘major outcome’ of Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori is “Kia ora ai te reo Māori hei reo kōrero mō Aotearoa/ Māori Language is a living national taonga for all New Zealanders” (Te Taura Whiri, n.d.). Te Taura Whiri plans to realise this aim of language regeneration in four stages, which correspond to the categories mentioned by Grin (2002). The first is to empower iwi use of reo in the community<sup>38</sup> (condition 3), the second to maintain and improve the quality of reo (condition 1), the third is to foster (condition 3) and the fourth is to increase the number of situations in which to use te reo (condition 2). The emphasis on iwi involvement in the first place is encouraging, because language can only live in a social context. Whilst this strategy appears to be comprehensive in scope, however there is little detail as to how the goals might be achieved in practice. The strategy to date is thus less ‘strategic’ than aspirational.

## **Plean 2028**

The Irish government’s 20-year plan has as its broad goal to “increase awareness and use of the Irish language as a community language on a phased basis” (Ó Cuív, 2006). The idea of Plean 2028 is to promote the use of Irish in public services and as a community language (with special attention to the Gaeltacht) and to make it visible on signage. Parental choice about education through Irish will be supported, as will the use of Irish by voluntary bodies and in the European Union<sup>39</sup>. Unlike Te Rautaki Māori, which primarily targets Māori people within a non-Māori nation-state, Plean 2028 aims to ensure that all Irish citizens become bilingual in Irish and in English<sup>40</sup>. This is a plan on a very different scale to the New Zealand one, but in the Irish context not actually new. Although the Irish state has often put forward over-ambitious and poorly researched aspirations for the use of the first national language, progress has certainly been made from the situation in 1926, when 18.3% of the population could speak Irish (Ó hÉallaithe, 2004: 173), and the figures returned in the 2006 Census show 41.9% of the population claiming some level of fluency. National bilingualism, although still highly ambitious, is therefore a more realistic goal in the medium-term in Ireland than it would be in New Zealand.

An importance aspect of both countries’ 20- and 25-year strategies is the development of minority-language media (Ó Cuív, 2006, Horomia, 2007). The Minister of Māori Affairs (2000-8) Parekura Horomia (Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāi Tahu) addressed the Ngā Aho Whakaari hui in 2007 on the subject of the Māori Language Strategy (MLS), explicitly emphasising the role Māori television might play in conjunction with the other bodies. A recent (2009) review of the Māori Television Service Act also underlines the potential power of coupling a national language development plan with strong media provision: “A revamped MLS could be the tūpuna document from which springs the central Māori language broadcasting plan” (Te Kāhui o

Māhutonga, 2009: 4, Issues 7). Seosamh Mac Donnacha has commented that as well as serving Irish-speakers, the aim of TG4 is to support State language policy, although the State has not set TG4 any specific goals in this regard (Mac Donnacha, 2008: 105-6). Although only one element of a greater language strategy, national television is a very powerful vector of ideas and images, and has the potential to reach large numbers of people.

#### **4 Role of the Media in Language Development**

Despite their status as official languages, neither te reo nor Irish has much traction in business or political affairs on a national basis. These domains of power are run overwhelmingly through English. Arts and cultural arenas offer more room to the minority languages, but not as much status accrues here. Television straddles the two areas, being a business which transmits versions of culture. Language activists in both countries have seen the potential of television to contribute to language development in terms of employment, spreading information, and enhancing the image of the language in the eyes of speakers and non-speakers.

##### **Television as nexus of ‘nation-creation’ and language status**

Television as a domestic medium provides a nexus for language status and ‘nation-creation’. In a place where the mediascape favours majority language outlets with a high proportion of imported programming, viewers may perceive a lack of relevance to their own lives. In the words of Graeme Turner, writing about the low levels of local content on Canadian television, “audiences persistently experience the erasure of cultural specificities that they consider to matter” (Turner, 2001: 376). This is the situation for both the te reo Māori and the Irish language communities in New Zealand and Ireland. The two countries have a similar broadcasting environment of a few local free-to-air channels, with English as a dominant language on most, and an increasing availability of digital and cable options. Local specificity on screen becomes rare. Although RTÉ carries much less imported programming than TVNZ, many British channels are freely available to Irish viewers. The importance of having a media outlet which can speak directly to and about the community it serves is encapsulated by Barry Barclay, who quotes the opening lines of Te Manu Aute constitution: “Every culture has a right and responsibility to speak to its own people in its own way. This is so fundamental it cannot be left to others nor be usurped by them” (Barclay, 2006)<sup>41</sup>.

National broadcasters have a special responsibility to the imagined nation, as they create and interact with communities of viewers, presenting images of the national self as well as local perspectives on international stories. The media are figured by Stuart Hall as “key cultural resources where ideas and assumptions about the world are created, worked on and perpetuated - a process through which information is strategically managed” (Hall, 1981). As the media represent a powerful way to communicate information and attitudes, and indeed to shape the terms of engagement in such matters, access to media outlets gives potential power to groups of people.

Conversely, if a group does not have media access, its members are likely to be mis- or under-represented in the public arena, so that attitudes of other groups in the society are based on a lack of information. When populations are dispersed, many people do not have the occasion to meet fellow citizens from a different cultural background. Television becomes the primary means by which people 'imagine' the other, and for the majority, this means the indigenous (Meadows, 2005: 36). Therefore it is of vital importance that broadcasts be as balanced and representative as possible. Meadows strongly advocates the right of indigenous peoples to use media, as to exclude indigenous voices is a form of institutionalised racism (2001: 139). It can be difficult for a 'mainstream' broadcaster to achieve the requisite cultural knowledge and skill to portray minorities. Even when commissioning programmes from the people themselves, editorial input into presentation can compromise the cultural integrity, whilst the economically-determined choice of time slot often militates against a wide viewership.

However, for economic and political reasons, national television broadcasting in Ireland and New Zealand has largely ignored certain sectors of the community, including speakers of the indigenous national language. Two factors contributing to the resilience of a language are intergenerational transmission and status. The absence of a distinctive audio-visual medium using the indigenous language has a negative impact on the realisation of these factors, as examples from Ireland and New Zealand show. Television has been described by Reg Hindley as "the major anglicising influence on every child in every home" (1990: 174), a point reiterated by Bob Quinn, director of the first Irish language feature film, who remarked on the influence of attractive imported programming on linguistic norms: "[Unless there is change,] the children of the Gaeltacht will continue replacing the language of their parents with the dialects of Bill Cosby and Kylie Minogue" (Quinn, 1990). The use of te reo in the media has been considered vital to its standing and efficacy amongst speakers and learners alike. Bishop Whakahuihui Vercoe spoke of the frustration Māori people felt with their Treaty partners: "Since 1840 the partner that has been marginalised is me – the language of this land is yours, the custom is yours, the media by which we tell the world who we are are yours" (Vercoe, 1990, quoted in Williams, 1993: 84). During his Waitangi address in 1990, he made a strong call for change, "...i te whakatinana i ngā wawata, i ngā moemoea o te tirīti o Waitangi"[so that the spirit and the dreams of the Treaty of Waitangi might be realised] (Vercoe, 1990, quoted in Williams, 1993: 84). Derek Fox (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou) remarked in 1993 that te reo Māori had been "brought to the very brink of extinction, more than anything else by the influence of monolingual broadcasting" (Fox, 1993: 132), and saw the media as a potential means of reversing the process.

### **Television and language**

Whilst media is perhaps not the ultimate tool in promoting and preserving a language, it certainly has influence on language practice, and a national television station should be considered an



important aspect of state language policy. As Pól Ó Gallchóir (Ardstiúrthóir/ Director General TG4) puts it, “feiceann an rialtas muid mar... feithicil... chun spriocanna a bhaint amach maidir le chaomhnú agus forbairt na teangan” [the government sees us [TG4] as a vehicle to achieve goals of fostering and developing the language] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008). Different media forms may be more or less effective in terms of language revival, and their effectiveness and popularity depend on the sociolinguistic context, e.g. Catalan newspapers, Native American radio. Whilst internet and radio are more cost-effective in terms of production and reach than newspaper or television, the social impact of television remains the most powerful in small nation-states like Ireland and New Zealand. Nevertheless, television in itself is not necessarily an unproblematic ‘vehicle’ for language development. This is recognised by Pádraic Ó Ciardha (Leas Phríomh Fheidhmeannach/ Deputy Chief Executive TG4), who explains that although TG4 welcomes the prospect of Plean 2028, and may contribute to language ‘revival’, their primary concern remains to provide good television<sup>42</sup>.

Mike Cormack argues that unrealistic expectations may be held of the potential of television in relation to language restoration, as it is clear that reasons for language use in social life are many and complex (2007: 62). Much depends on how audiences interact with the broadcaster. As Cormack points out, “[t]he emphasis here is not on media content as some kind of free-standing force, nor on media institutions and organisations as hegemonic powers, but rather on the space between the media and their users” (2007: 65). It is in this relationship between broadcaster and viewer that attitudes and relationships to the language may be nurtured. Barry Barclay comments that psychological barriers might keep people away from the media source at the beginning, but that there is an obligation to “keep the marae fires burning [until such time as] people overcome their shyness or their hostility” (1990: 2). The television broadcaster is a safe haven for the language and culture, encouraging relationships and reconnection. Regina Uí Chollatáin sees indigenous minority language media as providing “suíomh chun teanga agus cultúr leithleach a chaomhnú agus a shaibhriú” [a setting to foster and enrich a particular language and culture] (2007). In fact, the real potential for a change in language attitude and image lies in the relation between audiences and television content, and between the television broadcaster and fluent-speaking communities.

Belief and confidence are integral to the success of minority language broadcasting endeavours, coupled with a sensitive approach to audiences whose link to their ancestral language has been weakened through colonisation and its aftermath. The charged emotional relationship people have with the minoritised language requires recognition. McCloskey notes that for many in Ireland, the language acts as a “symbolic lightning rod” (2008: 78-9), releasing pain and confusion. This is common in places with a history of forced language shift (Maui, 2007; Le Morvan, 2000: 133). The process of reacquainting the self with this heritage is complex and gradual. Part of the role of

Indigenous National Minority television is, through image and presentation, to negotiate this painful history and to welcome people (back) to the language<sup>43</sup>.

Whilst the aim of language activists is often poetically described as ‘revival’ or ‘revitalisation’, these terms lack precision, and in fact cover a variety of scenarios. For example, a language may appear ‘alive’ when heard at public gatherings of symbolic importance, but if it is not used in the mundane activities of daily life, it is still at risk. Conscious of the vagueness of these terms, various writers on language ‘reclamation’ have tried alternatives. Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, for example, prefers the term ‘regeneration’, which implies growth and development. Joshua Fishman favours ‘revernacularisation’ over ‘revival’ (Fishman, 1991: 245), as it implies a significant number of speakers who use the language idiomatically and informally across a range of social situations. Aodán Mac Póilín of Iontaobhas Ultach, writing about a Belfast neighbourhood where non-native-speaking parents learned Irish so that the ancestral language could be passed on to their children as a first language, speaks of ‘repossession’ (Mac Póilín, 2006: 100). This term resonates with ideas of the post-colonial subject retrieving what had been taken, and also evokes ideas of language rights. All of these terms refer to the way in which speakers or possible speakers use the language. The advent of media in the minoritised language adds another element to the equation, and that is the way in which people relate to the language, even if they do not speak it.

Re-naturalisation or refamiliarisation of a language is perhaps the practical effect of TG4 and Māori Television. Whilst the terms ‘revival’, ‘revitalisation’ or ‘retrieval’ are useful in situations where the language is in danger of fading away completely, where a significant number of people have lost any link to the language, ‘re-naturalisation’ describes the process where a half-forgotten language is made familiar again. Different dialects are used to represent and include existing varieties, academic neologism is avoided (even to the extent of using borrowings from English, which due to long use seem less formal than newly-coined ‘book’ terms) and imperfect fluency is preferred to hesitant accuracy.

### **Image of the language for Outsiders/ Political image of the language**

Whilst so far we have been considering people who either speak the indigenous language or who have an interest in it, it must not be forgotten that there are many more possible viewers of the television station who are cultural and linguistic ‘outsiders’ with “a very limited understanding of what [language shift] is all about” (Fishman, 1991: 392). Television may change non-speakers’ view of the language, from the possible unease or distaste of the outsider to a more neutral acceptance. Although political independence and state intervention in Ireland in favour of the language may have led observers to expect ‘normalisation’, as explained in section 1, Irish did not become an integral part of daily life for most citizens. Non-Gaeltacht people have tended to see the Irish language as something ‘other’, either the poetic and noble language of the past, or the subversive

code of paramilitary activity. In both cases, it was seen as something removed from ordinary life. A dedicated television station, however, assists in the “attempt to develop a non-political role for the language” (Cormack, 2000b: 396). The presence of the indigenous minority language on television also has the effect of taking away some of the mystique (or associated political radicalism) which it may have had in the eyes of the majority. To follow John Walsh’s 2005 overview of the evolution of people’s views about the Irish language in society, the televisual prism causes a sort of ‘decommissioning’. It is difficult to maintain a romantic or fearful view of a language which lends itself equally to comedy, sports coverage, quiz and cookery shows. The ‘normalisation’ of the language as a taken-for-granted feature of broadcasting renders it familiar and eventually almost invisible (Scannell, 1996: 153). Cormack holds that as the language appears in the media “as the language of context, of presentation, and of the framework within which broadcasting takes place, [it is] pushed... towards a symbol of integration and the everyday. It becomes banal” (Cormack, 2000b: 393). It seems here that the language and associated culture give up the poetic power of accumulated generations by submitting to the prosaic and generic limitations of television. However, as discussed in Chapter 5, sometimes the worldview inherent in the language has the potential to twist certain genres beyond their usual limits.

Not only can the minority language broadcaster effect a change in the image of the language as perceived by outsiders, but it may also cause a change in the way its speakers are perceived. Cormack also astutely points out that the existence of the television service shows a “subtler but still potent recognition of the community as a separate identity” (2000: 393). As Reihana sees it,

This medium [the screen] has an important role to play in teaching people ways to perceive our culture. Māori filmmakers accept this responsibility as part of their kaupapa, and are constantly pushing boundaries, ideas and ways of seeing ourselves, not only with Pākehā but also with other Māori. (Reihana, 1993: 83)

Máirín Nic Eoin also notes that the minoritised language community has the potential to use television to its own ends (2008: 54), but as there is the obligation to broadcast to the nation at large, this is rarely done overtly.

A very important function of a National Indigenous Language television broadcaster is its contribution to an awareness in society about the roots and wellsprings of that society. Indeed, this was recognised explicitly at the launch of Māori Television in 2004. Chairman Wayne Walden remarked that part of the channel’s role is to be “a servant of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori,” but also emphasised that its long-term success was to be measured both “by the number of speakers of te reo Māori and [by] the role we play in better increasing understanding of our culture” (Māori Television, 2004). A similar view is taken by Colm Ó Tórna, who in 2002 reviewed the effects and progress of TG4 after six years on air:

... go gcothódh seirbhís dhúchasach teilifíse an ithir chultúrtha ina bhfásfadh tuiscint i measc an phobail i gcoitinne do thábhacht agus riachtanas a ndúchas sa lá inniu agus don lá

amárach. Go gcuirfí abhairín d'fheoil agus de chraiceann ar an 'dea-thoil' sin a bhuanléiríonn pobal na hÉireann i gcoitinne leis an Ghaeilge. [... that an indigenous television service would nourish the cultural ether in which the general public would grow to an understanding of the importance and necessity of their heritage for today and for tomorrow. That a little flesh would appear on the skeleton of that 'good-will' which the Irish public constantly show in respect of the Irish language] (Ó Tórna, 2002)

Part of the mandate of Māori Television and TG4 is to reach a national audience which includes such 'outsiders'. This sets the stations apart from most other minority language broadcasting initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement signed in 1840 between some Māori rangatira [leaders] and representatives of the British Crown. The Treaty set out conditions by which the two peoples would live together in New Zealand, and in the words of Tainui Stephens "provides a unique template for discourse between people of different mana" (2009: 14). There continues to be dispute about how to interpret the articles of the Treaty.

<sup>2</sup> May argues for the importance of geo-linguistic circumstances in language shift, i.e. that who speaks and where they are is more important than how many speak the language (May, 2001: 146). Thus, a person of high social standing using the indigenous language in a setting where many others have the chance to hear it may have a positive impact on language use, whereas a person without a public profile who uses the language in a place where few will hear it is likely to have less influence on the language practice of others. (An obvious exception is intergenerational transmission.)

<sup>3</sup> This shows that for the majority of self-reported speakers, Irish is not used in the home. Indeed, there has been a decline in the proportion of Irish speakers in Gaeltacht areas (except Meath and Waterford) between 2002 and 2006 (Central Statistics Office, Ireland 2007). In Northern Ireland, the results from the latest Census (2001) show 167490 out of 1617957 people claiming "some knowledge of Irish" (which of course may not mean the ability to hold a conversation). This represents 10.35% of the population there (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> According to the 2006 Census, 131,613 (23.7%) Māori could hold a conversation about everyday things in te reo Māori, and more than one in six Māori (35,148 people) aged under 15 years could hold a conversation in the language (Statistics NZ, 2006). This is an increase on the 2001 figure of 130,485 people. Kennedy has also noted a tendency for Māori people to use te reo Māori words whilst speaking English, in a desire to assert identity through language (Kennedy, 2001, quoted in Spolsky, 2003: 570).

<sup>5</sup> Jaffe is writing about changes in prevailing discourses about the Corsican language, from purist to polynomic, but the observation is applicable to other languages.

<sup>6</sup> As could be seen in the vituperative comments on the 'your views' section of the TV3 website, during the 'Tūhoe (T)Error' incident in October/ November 2007 ([www.tv3.co.nz](http://www.tv3.co.nz)).

<sup>7</sup> McIntosh speaks of an "incarcerated culture", where te reo and tikanga Māori are popular courses in prison, and asks why this "robust cultural identity" is not put at the start of a positive system (school) instead of at the end of the road (rehabilitative and restorative justice) (2007). Interestingly, political prisoners in Northern Ireland evinced a comparable interest and diligence in learning Irish whilst in jail. However in their case, the language was learned in secret from other prisoners, leading to the ironic description of prison as the 'Jailtacht' (play on the word Gaeltacht).

<sup>8</sup> This is not to mention the psychological obstacles in "learning a language that one feels one should know... should *naturally* know" (McIntosh, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> The publication of the recent 20-year language plan provoked emotionally-charged responses to the readers' poll section of *The Irish Times* website (November 2009).

<sup>10</sup> "A person could have 95% fluency in aural understanding, and perhaps only 50% oral fluency" (TeRito, interview 2006). Similarly, Ní Laoire refers to semi-speakers – people with very good sociolinguistic competence, but not good grammatical competence (Dressler, 1988: 189-90, cited in Ní Laoire, 2008: 84).

<sup>11</sup> Marcia Browne writes of the link between the language and a fuller understanding of tikanga in the context of adult learners of te reo, and of the different stages of emotional and mental release they undergo in their journey towards fluency and reconnection (Browne, 2005: 34, 35). Dónall Ó Baoill, writing about

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gaelscoileanna [Irish-medium schools for non-native speakers], has also commented on the different cultural values of language learners, focusing on possible implications for the language and its associated culture of a growth in language 'learners' rather than 'speakers' (Ó Baoill, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> The often self-congratulatory sense of being special because of the language is satirised by Flann O'Brien (1941): "Níl aon ní ar an domhan chomh deas nó chomh gaelach le fíor-Ghaeil fíor-Ghaelacha a bhíonn ag caint fíor-Ghaeilge gaelaí i dtaobh na Gaeilge fíor-ghaelaí..." ["There's nothing in the world so pleasant nor so gaelic as a real gaelic Gael speaking real gaelic Irish about the gaelicness of the Irish language..."]

<sup>13</sup> For example, in Ireland, 93% of people are in favour of the Irish language (53% wish it to be preserved and 40% would like to see it revived and spoken in the population) (McGreil & Rhatigan, 2009), but less than half of the people who claim ability to speak Irish are estimated to use it on a daily basis. In New Zealand, where a comprehensive survey on language attitudes has yet to be undertaken, small-scale studies show a significant proportion of non-Māori people to be 'generally positive' towards te reo, although within limits (96% of those surveyed in 2006 were in favour of Māori speakers using their language at home, whereas 80% were in favour of their using it in public (TPK, 2007: 7).) A greater proportion of Māori respondents were in favour (98% for private use and 94% for public use (TPK, 2007: 5).

<sup>14</sup> The term Reversing Language Shift (RLS) was popularised by the work of Fishman, and is usually capitalised.

<sup>15</sup> Other ethnicities make up around 18% of the population (Statistics NZ, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> See Fishman (1991: 122-148; 230-250) and May (2001).

<sup>17</sup> "Language had mana, with the power to harm, to heal and to change reality. Those with the ability to use it well, persuasively, poetically and wisely were held in high esteem and wielded significant power in society, just as they do today" (Whaitiri, 2006: 82).

<sup>18</sup> "The Waitangi Tribunal was established in 1975 by the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975. [It] is a permanent commission of inquiry charged with making recommendations on claims brought by Maori relating to actions or omissions of the Crown that breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi. The Waitangi Tribunal's vision is that, having reconciled ourselves with the past and possessing a full understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders will be equipped to create a future for two peoples as one nation" (Waitangi Tribunal, n.d.).

<sup>19</sup> This body has been re-named Foras na Gaeilge since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

<sup>20</sup> The Celtic branch belongs to the Indo-European tree, which also includes Germanic and Romance languages. The geographic and archaeological origins of the Celts are unclear (indeed the term itself has been questioned in recent years), but it is thought that these people came from central Europe to Ireland around the first millennium BC. Previous inhabitants had been there since the post-glacial Mesolithic era, c 8000-4000 BC.

<sup>21</sup> The 1916 Rising was a turning point in Ireland's struggle to win political independence from Britain. Over the Easter period in April 1916, rebels seized key locations in Dublin and the declaration of the Republic was made from the General Post Office (GPO).

<sup>22</sup> This stipulation was only removed in 1973.

<sup>23</sup> Although contemporary writers regret the period of post-Independence stagnation (Kiberd, 2009), when the "prodigious creativity of the 1880-1920 generation shrivelled as it was formalised in the new state" (Whelan, 2003: 96), it is important to remember that the conditions at the time - economic struggle, the need to set up and administer a new country, political bitterness and loss - were scarcely conducive to imaginative forward-planning.

<sup>24</sup> The caighdeán is currently (2010) under review (Pobail, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> There are currently 82 naíonraí in the Gaeltacht (Comhar Naíonraí na Gaeltachta Teo., n.d.), 155 in non-Gaeltacht areas (Ní Mhaoláin, e-mail 2010) and 46 in Northern Ireland (www.comhairle.org).

<sup>26</sup> There are 170 primary schools and 39 secondary schools in Ireland outside the Gaeltacht areas, operating entirely through Irish (as of February 2010), which about 37,800 pupils attend (Gaelscoileanna, n.d.).

<sup>27</sup> Uí Chollatáin maintains that "those in the non-Gaeltacht areas [could be said to] have repossessed the language by their allegiance to the community and the culture" (Uí Chollatáin, 2009).

<sup>28</sup> As Fishman remarks, "Institutions, although important, should be on tap and not on top of a language. The language does not belong to them. The language makes use of them" (1995: 172).

<sup>29</sup> The New Zealand Government followed Australia in April 2010 and signed a version of this Declaration.

<sup>30</sup> See Seosamh Mac Donnacha (2008: 107-8) for a useful framework by which to measure language planning.

<sup>31</sup> Ó hIfeárnáin has also written of the "mismatch" between the aims and methods of "national" as opposed to "community language beliefs, practices and management" (Ó hIfeárnáin, 2009). This is a real concern for those who wish to see a 'natural' language revived.

<sup>32</sup> Ó Cúiv was an tAire Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta/ Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs 2002-2010.

<sup>33</sup> The Pleán 2028 document takes a more mundane view, without however going so far as to redefine the concept of Gaeltacht (Fiontar, 2009).

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<sup>34</sup> Ó Ciardha remarks that Foras na Gaeilge and TG4 sometimes co-operate on projects of mutual interest (e.g. production of DVDs for the children's tv slot *Cúla4*) (Ó Ciardha, e-mail 2010).

<sup>35</sup> Waite argues that the Crown and Māori groups need to co-operate, the Crown providing realistic resources and the community groups the expertise and methodologies (1992: 31).

<sup>36</sup> Donoghue (2004) has commented on the changing relationship between Irish language voluntary organisations and the state.

<sup>37</sup> Te Puni Kōkiri has undertaken qualitative research into the factors that support or hinder the intergenerational transmission of the Māori language among Māori families (TPK, 2010). In Ireland, Scéim Labhairt na Gaeilge [Speaking Irish Scheme], which provides a grant for parents of Irish-speaking children, is “the only targeted mechanism the State has to increase the number of young native speakers, which is the starting point of all language planning initiatives” (Ó Giollagáin & Ó Curnáin, 2009).

<sup>38</sup> The Mā te Reo fund (2001-2010) was administered by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori to provide financial support for community-originated projects to increase language use, proficiency and strengthen the ability of communities to lead language regeneration.

<sup>39</sup> However, it is clear that the Irish state has much catching-up to do in order that the first national language be effectively usable in the EU context. There is a lack of qualified Irish translators and interpreters, and as yet (2010) no up-to-date official grammar. The Irish government has been criticised by the European Commission for these lacunae.

<sup>40</sup> However, some are concerned that the plan does not take account of the uneven power relations of the language communities, in that unidirectional bilingualism (i.e. bilingualism of native Irish speakers, and monolingualism of native English speakers) is likely to result, unless there is a better attempt to “distinguish between the diverse needs of two distinct speech communities – i.e. speakers of Irish as a first language on the one hand, and learners or speakers of Irish as a second language on the other” (Ó Giollagáin & Ó Curnáin, 2009). This would mean a two-tier plan, recognising the different needs of the two language groups.

<sup>41</sup> Te Manu Aute was a group founded around 1986 by Māori screen practitioners to further their vision and interests. It has since led to the establishment of Ngā Aho Whakaari (industry group representing Māori screen workers, founded 1996) and inspired Te Paepae Ataata (separate Māori board in the New Zealand Film Commission, founded 2007).

<sup>42</sup> “Níl sainscíl ag TG4 (ná RnaG ná RTÉ) sa réimse seo [pleanáil teanga] agus níor mhaith linn ligean orainn féin go bhfuil. Ba mhaith ann plean teanga agus d’fháilteodh muid roimhe agus chabhródh muid lena dhréachtú ach nílim cinnte gur ionann an dearcadh a bheadh ag pleanálaí teanga ar thosaíochtaí an chlársceidil craolta agus bheinn in amhras an mbeadh sceideal a chraolfadh pleanálaí teanga chomh tarraingteach leis an gceann atá curtha le chéile againne” [TG4 (like RnaG and RTÉ) has no particular skill in this area [language planning] and we do not want to pretend that we have. It’s good that there is a Language Plan and we welcome it, and we will assist in its drafting, but I am not sure that the view of a language planner would match scheduling priorities, and I would doubt that the broadcasting schedule of a language planner would be as attractive as the one we have put into practice] (Ó Ciardha, e-mail 2010).

<sup>43</sup> Horomia regards Māori Television as a highly significant development in Māori identity and pride: “We are no longer defined by a past of loss and pain. We are defined by... broadcasters. [Māori Television is a] means by which Māori can have a conversation with ourselves about who we are and where we are going” (Horomia, 2008). In a similar manner, TG4 is proof that the Irish language can engage creatively with contemporary life. “[Tá sé] léirithe ag TG4 gur féidir úsaid a bhaint as an teanga, go bhfuil maítheas ins an teanga, agus an tábhacht atá lenár gcultúr agus lenár n-oidhreacht fhéin” [TG4 has shown that the language can be used, that there is good in it, and the importance of our own culture and heritage] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007).

## CHAPTER 2

### IMAGE OF THE NATION AND IMAGE OF THE LANGUAGE

*Broadcasters redefine who we are, who we should be... viewing the world through the eyes of tāngata whenua.* (Houkamau, 2008)

TG4 and Māori Television are unique amongst minority language television broadcasters in their position as national indigenous channels. The atmosphere in both stations comes from a clear awareness of living a distinctive culture within a nation which recognises that culture (and its associated language) in an ambivalent way. The sense of self and sense of audience is strongly marked by this awareness. Despite obvious differences in their respective broadcasting environments, both stations attempt to reclaim a national (but minority) language and compete with other broadcasters to attract an audience by appealing to a sense of identity. The main difference between Ireland and New Zealand is that in Ireland, the State has claimed the language as part of its national image (whilst not actually using or developing it effectively), whereas in New Zealand the State (after great reluctance) categorises the language as a taonga [cultural treasure], but not as an essential aspect of national identity. The relation between the national indigenous language broadcaster and the nation-state is complicated by the fact that the television station relies on governmental support to exist<sup>1</sup>. Whilst its *raison d'être* is first to cater for the cultural and linguistic needs of its core community, the realisation of this aim is coloured by the obligation to speak to the larger group in the service of the nation.

The indigenous national broadcaster may play several roles, according to the public/s which it serves. In her writing on Minority Language Media, Gruffyd Jones points out five functions of television: communicative, cultural, economic, status-serving and linguistic, which mean that a dedicated broadcasting service is “essential to the well-being of the minority language community” (2007: 190). A very important action of the television channel is to demonstrate the vitality and drive of the indigenous language and culture despite their minoritised position. The broadcaster represents a people who will not be silenced in the public domain. This idea is encapsulated in the words on the cover of the 2009-2010 Pānui Whaingā [Statement of Intent] of Māori Television: *Ko te kākā wahanui rūrū ana te ngahere e kore e ngaro pērā i te moa* [the loud-mouthed parrot screeching through the forest will never disappear as did the moa] (Māori Television, 2009-10)<sup>2</sup>.

Whilst one obvious purpose of these broadcasters is to (re)create an environment in which a language can flourish, TG4 and Māori Television, as national broadcasters, have a greater goal. They also seek to create a space in which alternative cultures may thrive, where the priority given to the indigenous is not to the exclusion of other, particularly non-anglophone cultures. Michael D. Higgins, during whose tenure as Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht Teilifis na Gaeilge was

launched, regards the station both as a place for native culture to grow, and as an outlet for alternative voices:

My purpose [in establishing TnaG] was very much in relation to the form of indigenous culture, of establishing certain kinds of principles of sovereignty in relation to culture, but also more importantly... contributing to diversity. (Higgins, 1998, cited in Watson, 2003: 10)

Both TG4 and Māori Television engage with cultural and political matters within and beyond their respective national mediascapes. Perhaps the most striking feature of the stations is their refusal to operate merely as oppositional voices to majority language media. Through a “non-dogmatic cultural ecology ... [and] continuity” they avoid reactionary binarism in favour of a more autonomous world view, celebrating “the validity and value of minority identities” (Mac Póilin 1996: 158). The complex relations between television, nation and the indigenous community gives rise to broadcasting which, although figured as a national public service, actually goes beyond the nation-state.

## 1 Public Sphere

National Indigenous Language Television enters the public broadcasting arena with an extra dimension - the language - which is both obstacle and key to a new engagement with a national audience. Māori Television and TG4 try to occupy a different space to previous national broadcasters, and achieve this in part through the use of their respective languages. The use of the national minority language in this context means not only a development of the language itself, but also a new departure in broadcasting. As Michael D. Higgins noted during the campaign for an Irish-language television station:

Céim an-tábhachtach í seo, ní amháin i saol na Gaeilge agus i bhforbairt chultúrtha agus infra-structúir na Gaeltachta, ach i bhforbairt an chraolacháin sa tír freisin. [[This is] a very important step, not just for Irish-language life and the cultural and infra-structural development of the Gaeltacht, but for the development of broadcasting in the [whole] country] (Higgins, in Ireland, 1993).

Former Māori Television Board member Amohaere Houkamau similarly comments on the significance of Māori Television for broadcasting in New Zealand as “a more inclusive and more non-mainstream perspective on broadcasting [which is] long overdue” (Houkamau, 2008)<sup>3</sup>. For politicians speaking to a ‘nation’, it is important to emphasise the place of these new minority broadcasters in the national sphere.

Lotman’s image of the semiosphere, a space where stories and other narrative forms are organised (Lotman, 1990: 125, cited by Hartley & McKee, 2000: 72), is useful in regarding relations between narrative power and social power - or how (self-)representation is linked to cultural autonomy. In the semiosphere resides the public sphere, the locus of democratic discussion and the articulation of citizenship, to follow the definition put forward by Jürgen Habermas (1962) of Öffentlichkeit [openness]. This principle of openness has been taken to mean that a public sphere should be a



space for debate and dissent, open to all and free of market and political influence<sup>4</sup>. Recent theorists have emphasised the role of television broadcasting in contributing to such a space, which Appadurai terms the mediascape (1990). Hartley (1999) links the two, figuring the 'mediasphere' as surrounded and revealed, Russian-doll-style, by the semiosphere and other public forums (1999: 217-8). He also recognises the interdependence between the state and privately-funded spheres of activity in bringing such a space into being. Although the space goes beyond television, this medium constitutes a powerful aspect thereof, as a bridge between the state (in terms of publicly-funded broadcasters) and civil society. Indeed the media is at the heart of the system (Hartley and McKee, 2000: 8; Cunningham, 2004: 151).

Jensen argues that television can be a source of social identity or self-legitimation, providing a sense of belonging to a community, (sub) culture or political order (Jensen, 1990: 60). In this deliberative model, the emphasis is on consensus through open discussion, and transparency. The viewer is a participating agent, a citizen rather than a consumer. Viewers are far from passive, and are capable of taking their own meaning from what is seen and heard on screen. They create their own interpretation through context and experience; yet as Anderson points out: "[i]t is sometimes difficult to distinguish a text or a visual image from the political act of presuming to speak for, or represent, a group of people" (2003: 44). In this context, the image of an Indigenous National minority media outlet in the mind's eye of the nation is chimeric. Does the broadcaster show and tell obliquely or directly? Who is being addressed? The positioning of the viewer in terms of the public sphere is not straightforward when examining the audience of TG4 and particularly Māori Television. Is the viewer citizen, consumer, spectator, community-member, or something else? Stuart Cunningham insists on the specificity of "minoritarian public spheres", regarding them not as smaller versions of the national public spheres, but rather "vibrant, globalised [and] very specific spaces of self- and community-making and identity" (2004: 152).

According to Fraser, there is an inward and an outward function of a small media outlet in the public arena, on the one hand to withdraw and rebuild a stronger identity, and on the other to form discursive opinion and direct ideas at a wider public (Fraser 1994, quoted in Van Vuuren, 2006). This inward and outward movement provides a useful metaphor for the purpose of the station. The indigenous language public broadcaster enables a breathing space for the language and culture, a place where both may exist and develop according to their own genius or spirit. As in the physical act of breathing, both inward and outward flow is essential. Withdrawal does not necessarily imply invisibility. Whilst Haavisto mentions the importance of "visibility" and "the possibilities to self-articulate" (2007: 3), there is another effect - the growth of awareness. Linda Tuhiwai Smith speaks of the need to "restore a spirit" (1999: 28), and to undo the distortions of past (media) representations of Māori people. Whilst the importance of internal communication cannot be overstated, this process cannot occur in a vacuum. The (unmediated) voice of the people is a

“product of contestation with the mainstream public sphere.. [which] contributes towards cultural empowerment or cultural citizenship” (Forde et al 2002: 57, quoted in Van Vuuren, 2006). Even if the general audience do nothing more than watch material broadcast from these stations, a change in the national culture is in germination. As a reclamation of identity occurs on screen, other people will also witness it, even though they may not fully understand what it is they are seeing. Watson outlines this idea in the Irish context: “Consuming Irish-language programmes... is an element of participation in cultural citizenship even if it is a culture-consuming rather than a culture-debating, public” (2003: 117).

For this reason, a diversity of media outlets ought generally to be considered positive, as it opens the possibility of contributing something different to the existing public sphere. Gitlin argues, however, that there is not one single public sphere, but rather “a plurality of competing publics, or ‘sphericules’” (2002).<sup>5</sup> It is clear that Gitlin’s mediascape is the site of an unequal contest. Fraser (1992: 124) also recognises that the public sphere is an arena of combat; she calls the varying spheres “subaltern counterpublics.” In opposition to Gitlin, Cunningham, Hawkins, Yue, Nguyenm and Sinclair suggest each sphericule is rather a mini and microcosmic public sphere and thus “dynamic counterexamples to a discourse of decline and fragmentation” (Cunningham et al, 2004: 140). However, without interaction between the sphericules, there is a risk of ghettoisation. The other extreme of assimilation results from compromised sphericules which are not allowed the space to develop strong internal bonds of communication and thus become mere satellites of the larger public sphere. In reality, people are capable of participating in a variety of ‘spheres’, and so in small countries like New Zealand and Ireland, these risks are somewhat unlikely. Holmes sees individuals (rather than citizens, groups or communities) as “mobile across communicative mediums [where they] continuously participate not in a pre-given public sphere, but in the process of constructing publicness across a range of mediums” (Holmes, 2005: 81).

Niamh Hourigan believes that the public sphere is an unsuitable model for minority language television, because of its apparent limits (2003)<sup>6</sup>. Rather than a public sphere, which might imply a whole nation, Hourigan argues that the minority language broadcaster creates a ‘subnational electronic space’ (2003: 51) which separates the minority from the national, “replac[ing] national discourses with their own definitions of reality” (2003: 51). However, indigenous news coverage which takes a different perspective or focus can also destabilise the majority media or at least provide an alternative. Of course, news and current affairs genres are not the only possible locus for the public sphere. All genres contribute to creating an image which, if not constituting a ‘public sphere’ in itself, may certainly be considered as problematising the existing majority language public sphere. Joanna Paul (former Director on the Board at Māori Television) has remarked that there is a difference between an Aotearoa public sphere and a New Zealand public sphere (2005). Studies indicate that such media dialogues tend to have an uneven distribution of vocal strength,

with a unidirectional flow of information (Karim, 2002). This means that the minority group is well appraised of majority cultural mores, whereas the converse is not necessarily the case. Without linkages between them, a “mass of independent and parallel sphericules will not sustain a multi-ethnic public sphere”(Husband, 1998). In this light, the function of a national indigenous language broadcaster may be precisely to bring the national and minority public sphere (or sphericules) into conversation.

In a sense, the national indigenous broadcaster operates as a hybrid, using elements of diverse origin to communicate. Theorists have conceptualised this new arena as a ‘third space’ (Bhabha, 1990) or a ‘fifth province’ (Kearney, 1997), and I argue that Māori Television and TG4 in their broadcasting of inventive and geographically-rooted programming are contributing towards such a space. Bhabha’s third space, where “even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricised and read anew” (1994: 37), is an interesting paradigm by which to consider the function of TG4 and Māori Television, both of which emerged as a result of the will of the people rather than the state<sup>7</sup>. Kearney goes further than Bhabha, suggesting that we can consciously create an alternative space, which he calls the ‘fifth province’, in order to find our way as a country and a society (1997). In other words, the third space and the fifth province are areas of possibility. This is the ideal public sphere. Obviously, the notion of a solid sphere is not an actual fit. This is something more diffuse – perhaps more like the meeting of positive and negative charges that hold together an atom, both contrasting and communicating with one another. Although an indigenous public sphere is seen in contrast to a national public sphere, internal communication is also vital. As created zones outside or against the general public sphere of the state, Māori Television and TG4 have strong potential to articulate difference and communicate alterity to the nation which houses them, as well as engaging in internal debate and reflections on their respective peoples<sup>8</sup>.

Hartley and Green attribute this potential to “the ‘*unresolved national status of Indigenous people*’”[emphasis in original], which places their interactions with nation, state institutions and the media “at the cutting edge of evolving conceptualisations of citizenship and self in postmodern, mediated societies” (2000: 12). This position, on the ‘edge’ of the centralised national society, is also fertile ground for practical developments. The advent of local or community television, together with other regional initiatives (publishing, radio) is considered by Declan Kiberd to be one of the defining cultural developments in Ireland over the past thirty years – and these ideas originated in the Gaeltacht (2001: 82). An inclusive multiplicity, drawing on traditional forms and narratives, results in the National Indigenous Language Broadcaster providing a possible model for future public spheres or spaces in which people and ideas may meet<sup>9</sup>.

The self-reflexive movement of indigenous minority language television should not be overlooked by critics of broadcast media. In a small country, cultural reverberations affect production as much

as reception, and the recognition and development of a critical discourse on minority media may also enrich responses to public broadcasting in general (Uí Chollatáin, 2008: 19). The participatory nature of culture is underlined by Mitchell: “Culture consists in relationships. It is not a ‘thing’ until very powerful forces open to resistance make it so” (2000: 293). Reciprocity and engagement are essential to a real relationship. Reinterpreting the apocryphal phrase of Rewi Maniapoto from 1864, “Ka whawhai tonu mātou, ake, ake, ake” [we will fight each other, forever and ever], Alison Jones holds that although people are often more comfortable looking for problems and solutions, it is actually more useful to focus instead on the relationship and the process - as there may never be an ‘end’ or a solution that satisfies both parties (Jones, 2007).

The tension in the public sphere keeps it buoyant – in New Zealand, it is a tension between Māori, Pākehā and tauwiwi and in Ireland, between Irish speakers and English monoglots. In the context of television, there is an ongoing tension between public service ideals and commercial imperatives, between coverage of domestic news and reflection of international trends. If the Minority Language Broadcaster seems to eschew overt political content in favour of cultural reassertion, this is not to deny its position as a sphere or sphericule. Both Māori Television and TG4 came into being as culturally-motivated action and social movements led to political change. In Gray’s terms (2006), the cultural public sphere (i.e. not decision-making, but identity politics) is also valid (quoted in Hartley and Green, 2006: 342). Māori Television and TG4 provide a space for a new voice or collection of voices in their respective national public spheres.

## **2 Image of the Nation/ Community**

The primacy of culture and language in defining a nation has been a common feature of nationalist discourse since the late nineteenth century, and was famously invoked in connection to its relation with the mass media by the first president of Ireland, Dr Douglas Hyde, at the opening of 2RN (first national radio station) in January 1926: “A nation is made from within itself; it is made first of all from its language, if it has one, by its music, songs, games and customs” (Hyde, 1926, quoted in Gorham, 1967: 24). However, problems arise when aspects of language or culture not commonly associated with much of the population are chosen as symbolic or representative of a nation-state. Such a situation can result in a sense of resentment or imposition. Similarly, state-sanctioned ignorance of cultural or linguistic elements held dear by a proportion of the population can lead to a sense of exclusion or injustice<sup>10</sup>. As Appadurai writes, “one man’s imagined community is another man’s political prison” (1990: 295). The paradox is that a nation cannot exist as democracy unless there is imaginative room for all its peoples within its cultural ambit.

Nations may be generally defined as territorially-bounded areas with which a certain population imaginatively identifies. In the words of Mitchell, “nations are *represented* as spaces in which members of the nation have a strong bond with each other” (2000: 269). As it is not possible to

meet everyone in the polity, the sense of bond of belonging is 'imagined'. However, in small countries, such as New Zealand and Ireland, the significance of this feature is diminished. For indigenous language communities within these states, it is of even less salience. It is common for a fluent speaker of Māori or Irish to know a representative proportion of other such speakers through kinship, community and social networks. It is therefore not unusual for local (rather than national) identities to be created (Mitchell, 2000: 274) as imagined audiences for the indigenous broadcaster.

The position of a minority (indigenous) culture within a larger national setting is characterised by varying degrees of tension<sup>11</sup>. New Zealand, as "one of the few countries in the world where a nation-state was brought into being by social contract between indigenous people and an imperial power" (Walker, 1994: 111), is an interesting comparison with the case of Ireland, where successive generations of more or less indigenous people rebelled against the colonial forces until a measure of independence was achieved. In New Zealand, there are two separate peoples, two founding nations of the polity, such that any claim to 'nationality' is of necessity problematic and contested<sup>12</sup>. In Ireland, the gulf is more internalised, an imagined difference between Gaeltacht and Galltacht [non-Irish speaking areas] - if indeed the two be distinct communities (Cronin, 1993). The relationships between the various groups are played out in terms of sharing and shadowing. The power struggle between the two 'founding nations' of Aotearoa New Zealand persists in the cultural realm. As Ritchie puts it, "Pākehā culture... is dominant by power, history and majority. Māori culture is dominant by a longer history, by legacy and by its strength of survival and the passionate commitment of its people" (Ritchie, 1992: 6). Although the Pākehā model may currently have more economic clout, it is missing the important element of 'belonging' which the Māori model enjoys. As Stephen Turner explains, "Māori identities both precede and exceed the nation-based identity of Kiwi" (Turner, 2007: 94). Writing on the Irish situation, Declan Kiberd comments on the idea of hybrid postcolonial nation as inherently flawed: "Two cultures, national and foreign, although they experienced moments of interpenetration, were always finally separated by the exploitation practiced by one on the other. The nations that emerged from this battle of the shadows were fictions" (1997: 25). If Kiberd is correct, then the only hope for a 'nation' out of this post-colonial interchange is for the two cultures to face each other and try to come to a respectful symbiosis.

The issue of bi-culturalism in New Zealand remains unresolved (O'Sullivan, 2007). A willingness to share in a culture is not sufficient to *be* of that culture. It is necessary, if not to be born into a culture, to be immersed in it at a young age, or to make a significant effort to learn more about it. A knowledge of the language, even if partial, can assist in an appreciation of the culture<sup>13</sup>. It has been said of biculturalism that "in practice it is compulsory for Māori and optional for Pākehā" (Reihana, 1993: 70). This points to an uneven exchange of cultural knowledge and awareness<sup>14</sup>. Although the happy co-existence of multiple realities in a given country is not necessarily rendered impossible by

a majority of people who are ignorant about the minority culture, it is surely compromised. When the minority is indigenous, and furthermore recognised officially as an aspect of nation, such disinterest appears problematic. Is it acceptable to feel this detachment from an entire culture which is an integral feature of the place in which you live? Do the citizens of a country have an obligation to learn about their shared past and to try and interact fairly with different traditions that have made the 'nation'? In New Zealand, such an obligation is perceived in the Treaty of Waitangi, whilst in Ireland the Irish language has been invested with national symbolism to such an extent that for some people it is seen only in terms of cultural obligation, and not as a viable method of communication. Creating a national identity that admires and includes aspects of the Other reveals a process rather than a product. If undertaken with respect, this process can prove creative, as suggested by Wallace (2007). However, it may be that an indifferent attitude to the actualities of the minority culture persists, even in the context of a national identity reliant on the iconography of the indigenous.

In order to better understand such conflicting attitudes, we should examine what Jo Smith calls the "palimpsest" or layered nature of history and society in New Zealand (Smith, 2006). This means recognising multiple levels of interpretation, and accepting that there is no monolithically 'certain' version of events. A similar argument applies to the Irish context. Thomas Kinsella notes that language shift and cultural assimilation, concurrent with development of Irish political and cultural nationalism, led to a "palimpsestisation... and peasantisation, of the Irish language as a living vernacular and particularly as a language of intellectual or creative enquiry during this time" (Kinsella, 1995: 92, cited in Denvir, 1997: 51), such that provincialism became the refuge of a previously outward-looking people<sup>15</sup>. Here, the spirit of the language becomes lost in a collage of imposed change. I think another useful word for the palimpsest might be 'whakapapa', literally layers or strata. All of these elements - the original, the new and the variously healthy accommodations between the two - play a part in the current manifestation of the 'nation'.

Because national identity in New Zealand and Ireland relies on aspects of indigenous culture, the native tradition is available to interpretation and appropriation. As the metaphoric and symbolic heart of State policy, the Irish language was used to legitimise the State (Coleman, 2003: 177). Crisp similarly underlines the centrality of te reo to the New Zealand national identity project: "the Māori language will help shape Pākehā New Zealand identity. Already, our national icons are Māori" (2005). This is a common formulation of the value of the indigenous culture to the settler tradition, as specificity provides differentiation from other anglophone countries (Mead, 1997: 85, 92; Archie, 2007: 148)<sup>16</sup>. Awareness of the 'mainstream' need for Māori as a figure of identity goes back some time. Benton wrote in the 1980s that without recourse to Maori language and culture, New Zealand national identity is but a "paddleless canoe, adrift in a foreign ocean" (1984: 17). Sidney Moko Mead puts this scenario more strongly: "The option to become a culture-free amorphous New Zealander

is tantamount to cultural sabotage; its ultimate aim is to define us off the face of New Zealand” (1997: 84). Dr Tamati Reedy regards the main reasons for declaring Maori an official language of New Zealand as “national identity and national unity” (Reedy, 1987, cited in Waitangi Tribunal, 1989, section 8.1.4). However, official status without realistic support becomes part of the process of “inclusive exclusion” (Smith & Abel, 2007; Turner, 2007), where “the creeping maorification of the public domain” (Turner, 2007) results in the majority (settler) culture ‘spicing up’ their own national identity whilst denying real recognition to the indigenous culture they exploit. Derek Wallace believes that in order for a nation to persist, it must perform acts of inclusion to appease the varied social or cultural groups within it (even if such inclusion is only temporary). He regards the New Zealand treatment of Māori as “about the minimum of inclusion that a nation can get away with and still remain viable... the history of a series of partial, barely adequate inclusions” (Wallace, 2007). Máirín Nic Eoin, in a study of Irish language literature, also notes the tendency for state institutions to exploit the minority indigenous culture: “... an mórghaol go ndéanfaí comhshamhlú roghnach ar ghnéithe den chultúr mionlaigh ... fad is a dhéantar neamhshuim de réimsí dioscúrsacha eile” [the great risk of arbitrarily selecting certain aspects of the minority culture whilst ignoring other discursive areas] (2005: 35).

This approach to cultural mixing is the opposite of traditional ways. Charles Royal regards the healthiest relationship between indigenous and neo-colonial cultures as predicated on sharing, or “the gift of indigeneity” (Royal, 2009). Where the dominant culture of the nation selects and excludes, the indigenous way is to combine and include. Royal proposes that a more complicated but richer view of life and identity than that afforded by the terms ‘Māori’ and ‘Pākehā’ could be enjoyed: “we should develop tino rangatiratanga which is not in opposition to kawanatanga, and is a taonga for all New Zealanders” (Royal, 2008)<sup>17</sup>. Writing of an Irish philosophical tradition (primarily in the English language, although including some Irish-speakers), Duddy comments on the non-imperial and fragmentary nature of its starting point (2002): “Permeable, fluid, it bespeaks a character formed by invasions, assimilations, and historical accidents... characterised most of all by its inclusiveness—a degree of inclusiveness that may indeed trouble those who are committed to narrowly exclusive senses of ethnic or national identity (O’Brian, n.d.). What may seem inimical to logic is construed by O’Brian as an advantage, as the interstices of a fractured tradition allow space for polyphony and the co-existence of apparently mutually-exclusive versions of reality. “While imperial traditions differentiate themselves from other traditions by *excluding* the others, the Irish intellectual tradition differentiates itself by *excluding exclusiveness*” [emphasis in original](O’Brian, n.d.). This willingness to entertain more than one version at a time avoids the silencing of alternative voices.

Māori Television and TG4 have taken a plural position in relation to their respective nations. Both channels acknowledge and contribute to the image of the nation (particularly Māori Television), but

this is by no means their sole concern. By including issues of international provenance and interest, both broadcasters emphasise the global relevance of their service. The two television stations are also engaged in the vital work of re-representing the local and the indigenous, encompassing issues of language and culture which exist in their own right, independent of national concerns.

## **2.1 Alignment with the image of the nation**

One of the first tasks of a new television station is to create an image and to become a visible part of the national mediascape. After this has been accomplished, different aspects of representation and image-creation will take priority. Gruffydd Jones celebrates the capacity broadcasting has for alternative reflections on identity and otherness: “Through minority language broadcasting, we are afforded a special way in which to negotiate identity - stereotype, history, local identity – and the complexities of relationships between insiders and outsiders (2007: 198). Mac Conghaíl agrees, quoting the Green Paper on Broadcasting: “[Broadcasting] can critically interrogate a nation's history, culture and identity and offer a vantage point for the renewal of that heritage” (An Roinn Ealaíon, Cultúir agus Gaeltachta, 1995, quoted in Mac Conghaíl, 1997: 23). Broadcasting of this type to a wide audience can help different groups to understand each other, and, in the words of Maaka and Fleras, to get over the “conceptual gridlock that has frozen indigenous peoples-state relations into a kind of paralysis by analysis” (2005: 29).

Both TG4 and Māori Television have been quick to position themselves as national broadcasters on a par with existing channels, taking fourth and sixth place respectively on the remote control<sup>18</sup>. This claim to national prominence is partly to do with pragmatism (the need to be visible to the public) and partly to do with pride - a willingness to share the indigenous language and culture with the national audience. This section discusses Māori Television primarily, since TG4 has less need to stake a claim for the minority indigenous language as part of national image.

Māori Television was from the beginning explicit about its national role, and stated in its 2006 Annual Report: “We have purposely positioned Māori Television as ‘the face of Aotearoa New Zealand’”(Māori Television, 2006)<sup>19</sup>. The broadcaster appears eager to serve both Māori and nation, claiming that te reo is beneficial to both: “The Māori language... provides a platform for Māori cultural development and supports a unique New Zealand identity within a global society” (Māori Television website, 2009). Patrick Day saw the potential of a Māori worldview in the broadcasting arena to change the face of the nation, writing in 2000 that “the argument for Maori broadcasting is not just about programming: it is an argument for a changed understanding of what it is to be a New Zealander” (Day 2000: 272). It is interesting to note, however, that this focus on the national has become less strong in recent years. In the Chairman’s Review of the 2006 Annual Report, there is great emphasis on nation<sup>20</sup>, but this element is not mentioned in the te reo version on p 4 of the same report, which focuses more on the development of the Māori language on screen<sup>21</sup>. Of course,



the reason for the establishment of Māori Television was primarily for the language and culture, as pointed out in the five-year review of the 2003 Broadcasting Act:

Māori language and culture is Māori TV's mandate from Māori, that is the reason Māori pushed through protests, court cases for a Māori television channel. Māori Television exists because of the dire need for Māori language and culture to be on air, to be in our homes and to be there in our homes to be part of us Māori. Māori TV is not there to appeal to 'all New Zealanders'. All New Zealanders have TVNZ and all the other mainstream channels available. We Māori only have MTS and the neglected appendage Te Reo channel. (online submission-stakeholder submission to Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 22)

The difficult balancing act between the linguistic and 'national' obligations of both Māori Television and TG4 will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Nonetheless, as public service broadcasters, both Māori Television and TG4 are required to speak to the country as a whole. As the media play a "crucial role in 'imagining' indigenous people... for most non-indigenous people" (Meadows, 2005: 36), Māori Television retains an important national function. For the first time, people from a non-Māori background can see something of how life may be lived in this language and culture, although some argue that this is being pushed at the expense of a culturally-competent native viewership. Basque theorists Arana et al. recognise such tension as a common feature of broadcasting in a minoritised language, and categorise the competing demands as "aitaren etxea" [house of the father] (political structures, or language for the nation) and "amaren sua" [fire of the mother] (cultural aspects, or language for the community) (Arana et al., 2007: 159). Watson also sees television as a potential arena for the creation of identity, through a "public exploration and transfer of experience and memories" (2003: 90). When such an approach is taken on a national scale, however, questions of authority and authenticity become urgent. The symbolic weight of the national is heavy on the shoulders of any broadcaster with a public service remit. How does television use and how is television used by national ideas?

As television has the potential to effect change in cultural and national self-image, Māori Television is important for the transformation of Māori and also of New Zealand media. Maharey (2003) believes that television can fill in faultlines in a would-be bicultural society, regarding TVNZ as "one of New Zealand's key cultural assets... not much else holds us together these days." However, when 75% of the material broadcast is 'second-hand viewing' from another country, as was the case with TVNZ (Horrocks, 2004a), the potential of the broadcaster to engage in national image-making is limited. The high local content of the national indigenous broadcaster<sup>22</sup> lends it greater power in what Māori Television management refer to as 'nation-building'. In this way, the medium of television joins the apparatus of state, in the formulation of the now defunct TVNZ Charter, to "provide shared experiences that contribute to a sense of citizenship and national identity" (Hobbs, 2000). Māori Television presents a new kind of nation, 'Aotearoa New Zealand', which engages more deeply with the specificity of the place and people. TVNZ addresses a ready-made, unproblematic nation, assuming the general viewer to be part of a majority group which does not

question its hegemony over other communities. Kiwi ingenuity and down-to-earth-ness are lauded, with an excolonial flavour. The Māori Television version of the nation is more fluid. Everyone is expressed in te reo in inclusive terms in the slogan ‘*mā mātou, mā rātou, mā koutou, mā tātou*’ [for us, for those who have gone before, for all of you, for all of us], where ‘tātou’ means the speaker, the listener plus a third party or parties<sup>23</sup>. Smith and Abel (2007) note the apparent “diminution of difference... [as] the audience is interpellated as ‘New Zealanders’,” but suggest that as this collectivising address is made in te reo Māori rather than English (the common language of ‘nation-building’ discourse in New Zealand), the slogan demands alternative understandings (Smith & Abel, 2007)<sup>24</sup>.

Despite the proliferation of satellite options, viewers in Ireland and New Zealand still turn to national channels for a perspective on and of their home place. The principles of public service demand that the entire audience be addressed on equal terms. Maintaining an emphasis on local material and reconciling its funding limitations with the imperative to build its audience via unique programmes and coverage, Māori Television has endeared itself to New Zealanders via its symbolic appeal to ‘No.8 Fencing Wire ingenuity’ (a pioneering virtue that remains a revered national characteristic) as an overt feature of the more popular primetime programmes that the channel has offered (Dunleavy, 2008: 807). Mather’s version of ‘nation-building’ relies on coverage of events of national interest: “it’s a challenge to [keep linkages with broader NZ] on a consistent basis... [we cover] two or three significant events each year” (2007).

One such event in New Zealand is the national day of commemoration for ANZAC soldiers on 25<sup>th</sup> April<sup>25</sup>. Māori Television coverage of public events and ceremonies on this day from 2006 to 2010 has surpassed that provided by TVNZ and brought the new station to the attention of ‘mainstream’ critics. There was also a significant spike in ratings for the month of April 2009, indicating that the general public was also favourably impressed<sup>26</sup>. Minister Horomia rejoices in the nation-building effect this coverage has had, and foregrounds the Māori point of view as the reason for the appeal of the coverage to the national audience:

broadcasting can move the nation when events are viewed through a Māori lens. [...] Anzac Day... not only gave New Zealanders what they wanted from a public service broadcaster, but also what they did not *know* they wanted, and that was a sense of belonging and nationhood through a uniquely New Zealand perspective. (Horomia, 2007)<sup>27</sup>

Māori Television has built on this success, recording that the audience tune in “for quality indigenous programming at these crucial periods of the year” (Māori Television, 2008: 26). These ‘crucial periods’ are moments of national import. In the absence of strong local input to other national broadcasters, the indigenous channel sees its opportunity to appeal to the broad audience<sup>28</sup>. There is also strategic value in covering events of national importance, as political parties are eager to associate themselves with a broadcaster who captures the national mood.

As a national indigenous broadcaster, Māori Television has an unprecedented opportunity to open up dialogue between Māori and other communities in New Zealand. As Larry Parr (Ngāti Raukawa, Muaupoko), then General Manager Programming at the channel, explains,

Up until Māori Television, for most non-Māori New Zealanders, the Māori world was a closed door, and a door that they were too frightened to go up and knock on. With the benefit of some assistance from things like Anzac Day and the Dame Te Ata's tangi, we actually opened the door on the Māori world to non-Māori New Zealanders. (Parr, interview 2007)

There is a public service sense of accountability and responsibility to the audience:

Not just language but healing for Aotearoa nui tonu [all of Aotearoa]. Not just language and healing but nation building, a pushback against the mainstream media images of Māori as a net destructive force in the nation. Broadcasting is a means by which Māori can have a conversation with the rest of NZ about the benefits of a strong Māori people and language. At these levels we make our declaration of interdependence, as Māori who cling to our own sense of community, as New Zealanders on whose success the rest of New Zealand will depend... YOU MUST SUCCEED. Toi te kupu, toi te whenua, toi te mana... [Indigenous words, indigenous land, indigenous honour<sup>29</sup>] (Horomia, 2008)

Horomia's rallying call to the team at Māori Television in the context of the first World Indigenous Television Broadcasters' Conference (WITBC, initiated by Māori Television) reinforces the sense of responsibility the station has to its immediate constituency as well as to the country at large. There are clear expectations of the Māori Television Service from the public - although as there are many interested parties, some of these expectations may conflict. Sir Paul Reeves, also addressing the inaugural WITBC, warns against complacency, as representing and becoming a nation is a continual process, and the history of ANZAC Day is more complicated than has so far been shown on television: "What's beyond Anzac Day? [It's] a stop on a journey that's continuing" (2008)<sup>30</sup>. Such investigation of history beyond the obvious flashpoints, whilst unsettling the majority conception of the nation, would surely contribute to "affirming an indigenous form of social agency" (Smith & Abel, 2008).

Perhaps more interesting, although less trumpeted, is the special coverage on Waitangi Day. Whereas Anzac Day commemorates Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders fighting against a common enemy, Waitangi Day recalls the attempt to end conflict between Māori and the British settlers<sup>31</sup>. A feature of the schedule is an open debate on an issue particularly relating to New Zealand and arising from the Treaty itself<sup>32</sup>. Any potential antagonism is defused by a generally comic atmosphere (there are comedians on each team), where presenters and judges represent a variety of ethnic communities, and there are blatant attempts to amuse the studio audience. The tongue-in-cheek atmosphere of the event (the winning team in 2010 was presented with prizes of blankets, beads and chocolate, in an ironic nod to the gifts of early settlers to soon-to-be colonised peoples) does not preclude a real engagement with the issue at hand. The debaters make valid points, but disguise them in humour, avoiding direct confrontation with their opponents.

## 2.2 Bypassing issues of the national

Born out of struggle and activism, what responsibility do indigenous broadcasters have to remain activist, and what responsibility to take on the role of nation-building? Although at first glance it seems obvious that resistance to national 'norms' might be an appropriate strategy for a broadcaster whose origins lie in long-term struggle with representatives of state, in fact this is not the stance of either Māori Television or TG4<sup>33</sup>. This is less an indication of a 'soft' or dependent phase in the evolution of indigenous broadcasting than an indictment of the majority culture which assumes itself to be the lodestone for the actions of others. As the most visible manifestation of indigenous culture to date, the television channels TG4 and Māori Television do not need to challenge the national imaginary in such a head-on fashion. They are secure in the power of their own language and culture to afford a starting point for their work. Cultural growth and sharing rather than political separatism is the current priority.

Although the core audience for Irish-language programmes is figured as "a minority of national importance" (Conradh na Gaeilge, 1968, quoted in Watson, 2003: 63), there is often tension between the image of the language (and its speakers) and the image of the nation. Watson notes the paradoxical position occupied by fluent speakers:

Irish-speakers, while a national minority in a global context, have the advantage of possessing one of the 'props' of Irish national identity... Their use of the Irish language, however, simultaneously integrates them into Irish culture and alienates them from civil society and the political culture which is predominantly in the English language. (2003: 117)

This alienation from the 'national norm' is also noted by Mac Conghaíl, as he characterises the Irish language community of the twentieth century as

[p]obal imeallach, cuid mhor acu nach mbíonn rannpháirteach in aon eagraíocht ná gluaiseacht. Tagaid agus imíd mar Mhohican [a marginal community, many of them not part of any organisation or movement. They come and go like [the last] Mohican]. (Mac Conghaíl, 1997: 24)

He goes on to suggest that it is television which will provide such people with a platform from which to enact their voices: "Caithfidh TnaG iad seo a mhealladh agus áiteamh orthu iad fein a chur in iúl [TnaG must appeal to them and ask them to (re)present themselves](Mac Conghaíl, 1997: 24). TG4 celebrates the gap between the 'national' and the actual, showing diversity of image and outlook within speakers of the language. As well as this, TG4 presents the Irish language as resolutely ordinary, stripping it of past layers of overt political and national ideology. The primacy of the Gaeltacht is shared with new spaces for urban dialects. There is a local or international skew on content, so that the 'nation' is relegated to backdrop. Coleman, writing on recent developments in Irish society, is pleased to see cross-pollination: "new forms and channels of expression displayed a cultural and linguistic hybridity which seemed to transcend the narrow confines of an obsessively purist nationalist culture" (2003: 176). TG4 must be considered as a central figure in such reimaginings.

If the “common national imaginary” in New Zealand tends, as Smith (2006) says, to be a Pākeha one, the use of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in the public arena of national television may be a potent method of decolonisation. Māori Television provides an indigenous public sphere with a different worldview to that of the ‘mainstream’. A minority broadcaster can contribute to reflections on national identity because it provides a different perspective on the nation. According to Caughie, the national represents itself as stable - but that is a misrecognition. Distance from the imaginary collectivity may provide a truer picture (1992: 36), and this is in part the task of these alternative indigenous television stations. Their not being ‘standard’ or ‘mainstream’ is thus a virtue (Leushcke, quoted in Cummings, 2005). Of course, Smith recognises the risk that “bicultural branding” can serve to blinker policy-makers and the public from seeing and changing other aspects of national life. Nonetheless, she regards the programmes on Māori Television as capable of being “potential circuit-breakers... that challenge the imaginary totalities produced by the state broadcaster” (2006). She further believes that such symbolic cultural representation may lead to actual social and/or political change in New Zealand (Smith, 2006)<sup>34</sup>.

Smith’s ‘circuit-breaking’ is akin to Said’s idea of ‘interference’; opening the culture to “experiences of the Other which have remained ‘outside’ (and have been repressed or framed in a context of confrontational hostility) the norms manufactured by ‘insiders’” (Said, 2001: 24). However, the benefit remains with the majority, who like an insatiable “sponge” (Barclay, 1990: 76) looking for more information and insight, gain a new view of these indigenous minorities. Barry Barclay has written about the dangers of the indigenous film-maker ‘talking out’ to others at the expense of the core community (1990: 49, 74, 52). He noted that before the advent of a separate television service, programme-makers were under pressure to speak to the ‘wider’ audience: “It’s ‘talk out’, brother, or the scrap heap for you” (1990: 75). In some ways, it is not possible to address both audiences simultaneously. Recent inclusive moves in New Zealand towards “an acceptance of multiple views” ignore the real issue, according to Alison Jones, which goes “beyond difference to deep incompatibility” (2007). This is a world where “contradictory realities sit in interminable struggle with each other”. Although difficult, it results in a “positive and energised engagement, where differences are taken seriously” (Jones, 2007). Varadharajan also writes about the necessity for tension and engagement in a nation of heterogeneity: “Multiculturalism should not be viewed as a state of quiescence. It should be envisaged as a domain full of conflict in which dominant and minority cultures contest meanings, identities, values and interests on a regular basis” (2000: 144).

As will be observed in Chapter 3, national television in both Ireland and New Zealand had long presented only partial images of the indigenous language and of its speakers. The indigenous national broadcasters TG4 and Māori Television have the opportunity and the power to re-create and expand the range of such images, as well as to engage in a reframing of images of the nation. In doing this across several genres, the minority language broadcaster turns tokenism into autonomy,

and this is particularly true of Māori Television. As a public service broadcaster with a dual purpose – to provide a service to the nation with particular attention to fluent speakers of the minoritised language - both Māori Television and TG4 work towards a wider representation of selves to selves, as well as selves to others. The most important feature to note is that the starting point for such representations is the minoritised language community, our own selves.

### **3 The Local**

Most writers agree that the primary aim of a minority media service is to strengthen the language and culture, although there is disagreement about the extent to which this is possible and the methods employed to this end. Riggins sees the “ultimate purpose [of ethnic minority media].. [as] the peaceful preservation of the linguistic and cultural identity of a population that political and economic factors have put in a threatened position” (1992: 287). Preservation is the minimum goal, to which should be added in the case of TG4 and Māori Television the assertion and development of the indigenous national language and culture. In fact, Uí Chollatáin (2007) has argued that minority language media offers a dual service: the basic function of creating “naisc agus fóram comónta cumarsáide don phobal féin” [links and a common forum for the community] and a more abstract value, “mar uirlis chultúrtha agus teanga” [as a cultural and linguistic instrument]<sup>35</sup>. Both of these elements combine in the way the indigenous national language broadcaster engages in the public sphere.

The emphasis by both television stations on the local is partially a recuperative strategy, to reassert the continuity of tradition after attempted erasure (and significant break in continuity) by colonising cultures. As a small country with continuous habitation for millennia, despite a turbulent history involving dispossession, colonisation and subsequent famine and emigration, Ireland has often framed the local in terms of oppositional cultural nationalism (Corcoran, 2004: 165). The ‘local’ on television is thus something that is made in Ireland, with topics and undertones of relevance to this shared history and identity. Recent immigration means that ‘foreign’ (neither Irish nor anglophone) cultures also enter the ‘local’, usually in specific slots on the national public service broadcaster RTÉ (radio and television). On TG4, based in the west, areas previously considered peripheral enjoy more coverage, and Irish-language speakers (a group not adequately served or represented on RTÉ) come to the fore. In this way, the idea of the ‘local’ is expanded to include people and groups who do not reside in the political, administrative and media hub (Dublin, in the east of the country), or who do not share traditional ‘national’ characteristics. The local in Ireland has always been more important than the national<sup>36</sup>.

In New Zealand, a dislocated ‘local’ identity of settler rootlessness is counterposed to the tāngata whenua sense of belonging to and being of the land. Media texts, when not focusing on the ominous gothic (à la cinema of unease), often put forward a tongue-in-cheek picture of laconic Kiwi pluck

and ingenuity. 'Locality' is figured through landscape, sport, and the judicious use of Māori imagery and music. Due to funding limitations, only a small proportion of the television programming broadcast in New Zealand actually originates from the country, which means that the few productions which do appear somewhat exotic to their own people and sometimes provoke cultural cringe. On Māori Television, however, the local is normalised. Rooted in Māori culture, the station presents this Māoritanga as an integral part of New Zealand culture. By foregrounding on screen (in terms of visibility and prime time slots) what had been background, Māori Television redefines the local as inclusive even in its specificity.

To succeed as an indigenous broadcaster, the station must be authorised by the community (Molnar and Meadows, 2001). Maintaining a 'real life' connection with the croíphobal [core community] is vital for the acceptance of the channel<sup>37</sup>. The local is similarly of crucial importance for Māori iwi. Eruera Morgan (Te Arawa, Tainui), Tumuaki Whakaaturanga Te Reo/ Head of Programming for the Te Reo channel, sees the concept of *Ngā Pari Kārangaranga o te motu* (iwi programme slot) as a return to the sources and to show respect to "the various voices" (Morgan, interview 2009). Television is "just tapping into something that has already existed" (Morgan, interview 2009). The function of indigenous television as a link between the voices of the people and the wider audience (the role of television as communications medium) is particularly important in news coverage, for example. Hōne Edwards (Ngāi Hikairo) emphasises the centrality of local links to finding a 'real' story: "where a Māori reporter comes from is absolutely vital. You have no choice but to know the connections of your people to the people you are visiting" (Edwards, quoted in Archie, 2007: 59)<sup>38</sup>. Breandán Delap from Nuacht TG4 also mentions this in the Irish context, saying that the local traces which come across in the reporters (when they cover local stories for which they have direct sources) results in more grounded and immediate stories than if they had waited for wire services packages (2006: 59). National and international stories also can be told through the lens of the local community (Delap, 2006). A prize-winning promo for Māori Television's news programme *Te Kāea* emphasises not only reports coming in from the regions, but also that the news has a Māori 'feel' to it (Byrne, interview 2010). Reporter Dean Nathan remarks "Ahakoa he aha te kaupapa, te whānuitanga o te kaupapa, mehemea he Māori i roto, he take tērā mā *Te Kāea* [No matter what the story is, however far afield it spreads, if Māori are involved, that's a story for *Te Kāea*] (Nathan, 2010, on *Te Kāea* promo, 2010).

In terms of linguistic and cultural transmission, the national indigenous language broadcaster behaves as a storyteller. The function of the storyteller is twofold - to remind and link the insider audience, and to explain and accost the outsider audience<sup>39</sup>. Barry Barclay's idea of talking in and talking out (1990) is a helpful framework by which to regard the sometimes competing concerns of the indigenous national language television station. On the 'talking in' side, there is an intense sense of ownership and solidarity and the hope that the station will continue to develop and enable

generational communication and transmission of culture and language. One positive result of the production of television programming in the minority language is the encouragement of “high local content” (Mather, interview 2007). This allows for “tuiscint nua ar fhéiniúlacht tré ghuth a thabhairt don phobal...” [a new understanding of selfhood by giving a voice to the community...] (TnaG, 1997). On the ‘talking out’ side, there is pressure to reach a national audience (to justify public funding, as well as to ‘proselytise’). Needless to say, the two audiences are not clear-cut. When looking at the way the channels work in communicating and connecting with as opposed to ‘broadcasting to’ people, it is obvious that both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ audiences appreciate this involvement<sup>40</sup>. The importance of links to the communities of viewers cannot be overemphasised. Proinsias Ní Ghráinne underlines the centrality of Gaeltacht writers to TG4 (e-mail 2001), and Eruera Morgan speaks of the two-way process between Māori Television and iwi: “Te Reo and Māori Television is about iwi, it’s about people, it’s about whakapapa. We mustn’t be too precious about sharing that. Without the iwi, this wouldn’t exist” (interview 2009). In such a communications model, the work of broadcasting is not finished when the programme is aired, as meanings and relationships continue<sup>41</sup>. Writing about diasporic cultural expression and its similar struggle to assert identity, Cunningham reminds us that meaning inheres not only in what is seen on screen, but also how it is seen by the croíphobal: “Their politics cannot be read off their textual forms, but must be grasped in the use to which they are put in the communities” (Cunningham, 2004: 154). Indeed, the attitude of the outsider is secondary to the core aim of the television service, which must be to serve the native speakers.

Nonetheless, the minority language broadcaster welcomes global internationalism, indeed preferring it to a nationalism from which it was often excluded. Many minority language broadcasters have drawn on the experience of others in their campaigns and strategies<sup>42</sup>. The ‘vision’ presented on the Māori Television website situates the broadcaster in a greater global perspective, taking the remit of the television channel beyond its statutory obligation to speak to the New Zealand public and claiming a position in relation to other indigenous broadcasters: “Whakaata Māori, he pourewa pāpāho taketake kei ngā taumata o te ao/ Māori Television is a world-class indigenous broadcaster” (Māori Television Annual Report, 2008). Just as Horomia mooted the possibility of Māori Television’s replacing ‘mainstream’ television, Pita Turei (Ngāti Paoa, Ngāi Tai Ki Tamaki, Ngā Rauru Kiitahi) of Ngā Aho Whakaari asserts in this context that “Māori is mainstream [and] the base for international networks that wouldn’t exist without us” (Turei, 2008). This may be a strong statement, but it is one which is becoming more difficult to refute.

Initiated by Maori Television, the World Indigenous Television Broadcasters’ Network (WITBN) creates a space in which programmes and formats may be exchanged. This network represents a pro-active approach to overcoming common challenges by using the experience and perspectives of



the broadcasters<sup>43</sup>. Building on existing relationships between the broadcasters, the Network promotes staff exchange and placements (WITBN, 2008: 6). Elements of a shared current affairs programme 'Indigenous Insight'<sup>44</sup> have already been screened on the partner stations, and there are plans for sharing documentary programmes in the future (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008)<sup>45</sup>. This scenario of international co-operation is now possible because of developments in technology, but the inspiration and the links come from indigenous innovation. The frame of reference is broadened beyond the nation to all humanity.

To the national and international outsider eye, the primary role of the indigenous national broadcaster is one of advocate or ambassador. Even if there is a small viewing audience, the fact that these programmes are being made is "an important aspect of the right to communicate, and confirms the importance of national, regional and local narratives" (Higgins, interview 2001). Often the most novel aspect of a minority television station is the visibility and respect for a language and culture previously unheard and invisible in the national public sphere. Duncan Petrie, writing about European Cinema, points to the potential power of screen images:

The creation of images is a complex process of making visible, of forcing an audience to look, to question and to reassess the nature of the world around them ... [It] can help us to recognise the complexities of identity, including processes of transformation and change ... [We enter] a realm of the imaginary where not only are old identities interrogated, deconstructed and in some cases discarded, but new identities, new images and new social possibilities are being created and played out. (1992: 3)

Petrie's point holds equally for the ideological work of a new national indigenous television service. By adding to the previously limited collection of images of life in the minoritised language, and by making such images visible to a wider audience, the broadcaster invites the audience to enter into a relationship with the language and culture. Television images with a strong local resonance may contribute to an evolution in the way viewers conceive of their (local and national) identity.

Perhaps the most overlooked role an indigenous broadcaster may play in the pursuit of its duties is that of inventor. Television norms and conventions are played with and twisted into new shapes, enabling a different kind of broadcasting. Bob Quinn in Ireland and Barry Barclay in New Zealand are the strongest voices in promoting distinctive production practices (which often result in visual alterity) drawn from their respective cultures<sup>46</sup>. Writing on Quinn's documentary work, *Graceville: na Connemaras i Minnesota*, Ó Conaire and Hobbs remark on

the remarkable ability of the use of indigenous language to instantly elicit and articulate cultural perspective. Native documentary film which utilises native language emphasises the ability of the native lens to empower the previously unrepresented. (Ó Conaire & Hobbs, 2006: 4)

Barclay has written a series of books and articles dealing with the theme of alternative approaches to film-making and representation, based on the fact that there is a different way of thinking:

What has changed enormously, of course, is... the technology and our attitudes to using the technology. We can reshape our priorities; we can access the tools; we know there is more to life than the nation-going-forward. (Barclay, 2006)

It is perhaps in this area that the most interesting possibilities lie in terms of international television studies. In rethinking approaches to production, editing, scheduling and other aspects of programme-making and broadcasting, indigenous producers embark on a new relationship with the conventions of television.

Māori Television and TG4 beat the 'first' national broadcasters at their own game, providing 'public service plus' television. The 'plus' is in their self-awareness and self-reflexivity. The stations recognise that they cannot represent a singular nation, nor do they try to. They present different aspects of a multi-faceted 'nation', opening an arena in which may be broached new ideas of identity and belonging. Not only do media in the minority language act as "gléasanna tarrthála" (2008: 5) [lifebelts] or protectors for that language, but they also provide a forum in which reconstruction and recreation of ideas about the media itself may occur – they are "uirlisí atógála" [tools for rebuilding] (Uí Chollatáin, 2008: 19). The intellectual tradition of the minority language affords alternative perspectives on existing media production even as it contributes to the creation of a new contemporary mediascape.

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<sup>1</sup> Most minority language broadcasters worldwide depend on public subsidy, and thus lack complete autonomy (Guyot, 2007: 37). The constraints on Māori Television and TG4 in this regard (discussed in Chapter 3) are therefore not peculiar to these two stations.

<sup>2</sup> Another important layer of meaning is associated with the kākā, as recounted in the Māori Television stationery, "In nature, the kākā pollinates other plants by drinking the nectar of the kōwhai flower. This reflects the nature of Māori Television and its audience: together we pollinate Māori language, Māori culture and Māori knowledge."

<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the Māori Television Corporate Profile (2009) emphasises that the station is "based on inclusivity" (Māori Television, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> These writers refer to a deliberative arena, which is 'talk-centric' rather than 'vote-centric'. Such a modus operandi enables smaller groups who would never achieve a political majority the possibility of influencing public opinion (Kymlicka & Patten, 2003: 15). This matches Carol Gunn's remark that Māori Television is "an influencer" (interview 2010). See also Stuart's definition of public sphere as "the sum total of all visible decision-making processes within a culture" (2005: 13).

<sup>5</sup> Gitlin figures these spehricules as "a scatter of globules, like mercury," the broken pieces of an original public sphere (1998: 173).

<sup>6</sup> The audience is not usually 'intent' on watching, and most minority language speakers also speak the majority language, and so are able to participate in the wider 'national public sphere' (Hourigan, 2003: 48-9).

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<sup>7</sup> See Chapter 3 for further details.

<sup>8</sup> According to Stuart, the Māori public sphere is actually closer to the real than the ideal, because marginalisation has given it a stronger drive (2005: 18). In small communities and hapu there is easy access to power-brokers, and as decision-making occurs at the marae, there is blurring between the social and the political (2005: 20).

<sup>9</sup> In fact, Nieminen's idea of networks rather than spheres might be an interesting spatial metaphor to pursue (quoted in Haavisto, 2007: 7). Another metaphor for the spaces created by the stations is the Foucauldian one of heteropia. A heteropia is a layered space of 'otherness', involving physical and imagined space. Foucault developed the idea to refer to spaces with multiple functions, often a site or space of relations, e.g. church, garden, library. According to Soja, a colony is a "heteropia of compensation, a perfect created space" (Soja, 1999: 119).

<sup>10</sup> "When one significant section of the community burns with a sense of injustice, the rest of the community cannot safely pretend that there is no reason for their discontent" (Waitangi Tribunal, 1993: section 6.3.9).

<sup>11</sup> Máirín Nic Eoin expresses the enforced psychic marginalisation of Irish language writers: "an tuiscint go bhfuil siad as áit, ar shiúl ó luachanna cultúir an phobail timpeall orthu... an pobal nár éirigh leo ceannas polaitiúil a bhaint amach ach a mhaireann mar ghuth freasúrach frith-heigeamaíneach ar imeall an náisiúinstáit" [the realisation that they are out of place, not on track with the cultural values of the society around them.. a community which did not succeed in achieving political power but which remains as an oppositional voice at the fringes of the nation-state] (2005: 46).

<sup>12</sup> Whilst this does not apply in the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland, similar issues abound in Northern Ireland, where the physical scar of partition remains.

<sup>13</sup> Larry Parr sees the language as key to any real understanding of the Māori world: "My logic was that there would be a hell of a lot more understanding within Māori and non-Māori if all non-Māori spoke Māori, because they would understand the culture, they would understand guiding principles and important concepts much better and therefore it would promote a degree of harmony in the society" (Parr, interview 2007).

<sup>14</sup> Stuart Murray argues that a particular ideal of biculturalism "fundamentally Maori in spirit" is advocated in the film *Ngāti*, where the layers of visible meaning multiply in relation to the cultural capital of the viewer (2009: 62). Nonetheless, he sees this biculturalism still as a Pākehā desire, for the Māori characters seem self-sufficient and strong in their ways. Jones and Jenkins (2008) also write of the greater Pākehā 'need' or curiosity for things Māori.

<sup>15</sup> Here, Kinsella writes of a process by which native intellectual and spiritual inclusivity turned to a fearful exclusion of diversity due to the experience of colonisation and loss of self-confidence.

<sup>16</sup> In both New Zealand and Ireland, the nation uses aspects of the indigenous language and culture in the formation of a national identity in opposition to larger anglophone neighbouring countries. For example, the tourism industry has drawn heavily on indigenous specificity in its marketing campaigns, sometimes misrepresenting or idealising the cultures involved. Māoritanga and Gaeltacht culture are privileged elements of tourist images of the two countries, and yet are less prominent at decision-making levels in the realms of economics and politics (Tittley, 1996: 67).

<sup>17</sup> Royal's message is that a true engagement with culture will help people to "find new and creative ways of being tangata whenua" (2008). Such an inclusive approach derives from traditional ways, and draws on a conceptual model developed in the 1970s by John Te Rangianiwaniwa Rangihau (Ngāi Tuhoe) to describe Māoritanga (Māori culture) and a Māori world-view. In Rangihau's model, Māoritanga is positioned in the centre and Pākehātanga is placed on the periphery, reflective of an idyllic Aotearoa-New Zealand society, where values are inter-related (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004: 16). The language is essential to such a template, connected to politics (ability to talk on the marae), mauri (self-esteem), and mana (to reverse the dislocation of colonisation) (Ka'ai, 2004: 201).

<sup>18</sup> In Ireland, the order of prominence is: RTÉ1, RTÉ 2, TV3, TG4, and in New Zealand, it is TV One, TV Two, TV3, C4, Prime and Māori Television. Achieving a high position on the remote control takes on the status of a brand, and the change of name of Teilifís na Gaeilge to TG4 in 1999 was to ensure fourth position.

<sup>19</sup> The funding agency Te Māngai Pāho also focuses on the relation between the Māori and the national, seeking "to maximise the benefits that Māori language and culture can make nationally and internationally as our nation's point of difference" (TMP, Statement of Intent 2008-2013: 21).

<sup>20</sup> "[T]his channel belongs to each of them [all New Zealanders]; where they can see, hear and celebrate their unique New Zealand culture. [...] all New Zealanders to feel a sense of ownership of the channel" (Chairman's Review, in Māori Television, 2006: 3).

<sup>21</sup> "Mā tēnei rauataki, kua whakaritea e mātau te whanaketanga o tētahi mahere nui mo te reo Māori, ngā hōtaka reo Māori nui te kounga, te whakapakari ake i te kounga hanga hōtaka, me te rārangi hōtaka hei kukume mai i te whānuitanga o ngā kaimātakitaki" [This strategy will set out the beginnings of our major policy for the Māori language, Māori language programming quality, the flourishing of production values, with a schedule/ range of programmes to attract the broadest of audiences. (Muriwai, 2009, quoted in Māori

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Television, 2009: 3). Indeed, Jim Mather clearly states: “Ultimately [the success of Māori Television] has got to be measured by the contribution we make to the revitalisation of the Maori language and culture” (Mather, interview 2007).

<sup>22</sup> Māori Television broadcast more than 90% New Zealand content (Māori Television, 2005: 5).

<sup>23</sup> This was in 2007 abbreviated to ‘*mā tātou*’ for some of the station’s publicity. Kahi (2009) considers it problematic that the abbreviated form of the slogan omits the nuanced inclusivity of diverse groups evident in the original form.

<sup>24</sup> Smith and Abel have begun an interesting examination of Māori Television in terms of bicultural representation and national identity, where they refer to the role of Pākehā and specifically government in supporting Māori Television. They believe such “bicultural benevolence” may mask a reluctance to engage in social, political or economic change, and ask: “How might Māori Television dislodge... narratives [of nation] via their own symbolic cultural interpellations? Can these largely symbolic processes help to open out our understandings of cultural belonging in this contemporary settler nation?” (Smith & Abel, 2008). Whilst these are crucial questions, they can only be fully explored if the pervasive element of language and language image is included in the analysis. Where Smith and Abel refer to an ‘iwi eye’ view of the nation (Smith & Abel, 2008), I would add the aural element.

<sup>25</sup> Over the past six years, Māori Television has devoted a full day’s broadcasting schedule to mark Anzac Day. As the channel’s usual broadcast hours are 2/3pm - 11:30pm, it is significant that 18 hours are set aside on this day, from dawn cenotaph services to evening music shows carrying on the theme of war sacrifice. Mottos reveal something of the intended message - unity, respect and memory (2007: *Nā rātou, mō mātou - Let’s honour them together* [literal translation: They did it for us], 2008: *A Tātou Tāonga* [Our Treasures], 2009: *Kotahi te wairua* [One Spirit], 2010: *Kōtahi te rā* [One Day]).

<sup>26</sup> Ongoing requests to repeat the broadcast in 2006 led to a highlights package being screened in August of that year. In 2007, the station took the coverage further afield, broadcasting from Auckland, Gallipoli and Chunuk Bair as the day went on. The Anzac Day coverage attracted more than half a million viewers in 2009 (Horan, 2009).

<sup>27</sup> Another important national moment was the broadcasting of the the tangi of Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu, the Māori Queen. As well as extensive coverage by radio and print media, there was live television coverage of the event by both mainstream and Māori television. Joris De Bres comments favourably that “We were shown a New Zealand in which over 100,000 people, Māori, Pākehā, Pasifika and of many other ethnicities, travelled in person to Turangawaewae to pay their respects to this quiet leader and advocate for intercultural understanding, with thousands more paying their tributes on line and in the media” (2007).

<sup>28</sup> TG4 similarly focus their attention to providing special coverage and programming for moments of national importance in Ireland, e.g. St Patrick’s Day and Christmas. TG4 had a 9.4% audience share on St Patrick’s Day 2008, more than three times the usual amount.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Toi tu te kupu, toi tu te mana, toi tu te whenua’ is a whakataukī spoken by Tinirau of Wanganui. “It is a plea to hold fast to our culture, for without language, without mana (spirit), and without land, the essence of being a Māori would no longer exist, but [as] a skeleton which would not give justice to the full body of Māoritanga” (Thompson, e-mail 2010).

<sup>30</sup> It has been remarked by Māori producers that the station’s use of a non-Māori production house for the 2007 Anzac Day coverage demonstrates a lack of commitment to developing more indigenous viewpoints (Collier, 2007).

<sup>31</sup> Ngā Aho Whakaari were not happy with the 2010 coverage, because although Māori Television and TVNZ collaborated well together, there was not enough reo (Kahi, 2010: 4).

<sup>32</sup> In 2008, the theme was ‘Why Tangi?’, in 2009 ‘The Great Land debate’ and in 2010 ‘Now is the time for New Zealand to close its immigration gates’.

<sup>33</sup> Cormack has noted the absence of any strong link between minority language media and challenge to the state in political terms (2000). Whilst this may seem surprising to outsiders, a conservative response from state-funded media outlets is perhaps the most pragmatic option, given that they rely on government subvention to continue to broadcast. Riggins has noted that in some cases, state funding constitutes an attempt to control the broadcasting energies of the minority (Riggins, 1992: 9-11).

<sup>34</sup> If, as Butterworth has it, “existing institutional arrangements and power structures are replicated and reinforced by television entertainment” (Butterworth, cited in Goode, 2004: 127), it seems logical to think that a change in television ‘norms’ may eventually lead to a shake-up of larger power structures.

<sup>35</sup> Whilst Uí Chollatáin figures the first function as operating more for immigrant minority language media, and the second for indigenous minority language media, I contend that Māori Television and TG4 perform both functions, although both are not always visible to the same degree.

<sup>36</sup> Sometimes, the ‘local’ is extremely so, as Delap suggests, in his comment on fluctuations of audience interest in stories from different townlands: “Lena chois sin, níor mhór a rá nach gá go guirfeadh muintir Leitir Mhóir suim i scéal áitiúil as Indreabhán gan trácht ar scéal ó Ghaoth Dobhair nó ó Chorca Dhuibhne” [Of

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course, it goes without saying that people from Leitir Mór will not necessarily be interested in a story from Indreabhán – not to mention a story from Gaoth Dobhair or Corca Dhuibhne](Delap, 2006).

<sup>37</sup> Kearney argues that rather than a unitary nation, Ireland continues to operate in ways reminiscent of the tuath system [smaller political sub-divisions], so that the local and the regional should be strengthened as the arches of the ‘nation’ (1997). For Kearney, unity is an imaginary concept protected by filí [poets] rather than political leaders (Kearney, 1997: 102).

<sup>38</sup> Te Aroha Mane-Wheoki also comments on importance of kapa haka, sport, reo and family contacts for research and reporting on TVNZ’s *Marae* (Mane-Wheoki, interview 2010). Dean Nathan, presenter and reporter for Māori Television’s *Te Kāea*, demonstrates the intimacy of the connection with his home area, as he jokes “Momona pai te kairipoata i roto i ēnei mahi, te pai o te iwi te whāngai i a mātou”/Reporters in this region tend to gain weight because they are so well looked after (Nathan, 2010, *Te Kāea* promo, 2010).

<sup>39</sup> Although this function is serious, the form can be very successful when it is entertaining. Television here acts as a forum for storytellers. Pól Ó Gallchóir (interview 2008) portrays the station as a meeting place for different ideas and stories: “Beidh scéalta le hinste agus beidh gá le hardán chun na scéalta sin a insint agus beidh an ardán teilfise ann i gcónaí leis na scéalta a inseacht” [There will always be stories to be told, and there will always be a need for a platform from which to tell these stories. Television is another platform].

<sup>40</sup> 65% of Māori respondents to a 2008 telephone survey perceive Māori Television as “connecting them to Māori people, lifestyles, language and culture”, and 22% of non-Māori felt the same (Kōrero mō Whakaata Māori/ Māori Television Corporate Profile 2009: 6).

<sup>41</sup> Both TG4 and Māori Television reporters have spoken of connections with guests and interviewees continuing well beyond the project for which they were invited – unlike the situation in majority language media, where the relationship lasts only for the length of time the guest is on set.

<sup>42</sup> It is obvious that the newer stations have drawn on the discoveries of previous initiatives in such areas as campaigning for a television service, getting established and approaches to scheduling, marketing and genre. Hourigan writes of the transnational “diffusion” or mutual learning (2007: 70), in terms of pan-Celtic television, in which later stations were indirectly influenced by S4C (Hourigan, 2007: 71). The experience of TG4 was also drawn upon in the preparation of Māori Television (Horrocks, 2008).

<sup>43</sup> So far, the Network is governed by a six-member council (TITV, Fiji TV, SABC, BBC ALBA, TG4, S4C, NITV, APTN and Māori TV). Chairship rotates every two years and members meet every six months- alternate meetings in different sectors of the world, hosted by an indigenous broadcaster (WITBN, 2008).

<sup>44</sup> Originally titled *Te Matapihi* [the window], this programme uses English as a global lingua franca to link stories from various indigenous language cultures. The first major WITBN-led collaboration was a weekly current affairs programme called *Indigenous Insight*. Hosted by Māori Television current affairs presenter Julian Wilcox, the pilot series depicted issues “through the eyes and lives of the tangata whenua of each of those countries” (Mather, 2009).

<sup>45</sup> WITBN will also deliver up to 32 one-hour documentaries free of charge to each of the member countries (Mather, 2009).

<sup>46</sup> See Fidelma Farley (2007: 165) and Jerry White (2009) for a discussion of some of the work of Bob Quinn. The Cinegael (n.d.) website also has details on Quinn’s films.

## CHAPTER 3

### BROADCASTING ENVIRONMENT

A consideration of the broadcasting environment of Ireland and New Zealand up to the end of the twentieth century makes clear the reasons why speakers of Irish and te reo Māori wanted a separate television broadcasting service in their respective countries. This chapter examines the efforts of national media outlets in terms of provision for broadcasting in the indigenous national language. The first section examines ‘mainstream’ broadcasters, and the second traces the campaigns leading to the establishment of the two national indigenous language television stations, TG4 and Māori Television. The third section investigates the aims and purposes of the two channels, and how their funding and governance structures affect their ability to realise these goals.

#### 1 Mediascapes in Ireland and New Zealand

The respective mediascapes in Ireland and New Zealand have grown out of specific circumstances in each country, based on demographics, topography and prevailing ideologies over the decades since mass broadcast media were first introduced there (1920s for radio and 1960s for television). In general, there was little indigenous minority language programming on ‘mainstream’ national radio and television, apart from an early “golden age” on RTÉ radio in the 1940s and 1950s in respect of the Irish language (Watson, 2003: 52; Kelly, 2002: 131)<sup>1</sup>. Whilst national ideology in Ireland in theory supported the indigenous language and culture, this did not translate into significant media presence across the genres or in prime time. Only certain (mostly traditional) aspects of the language and culture were represented on air, and the language was portrayed more as a symbolic object than a living medium of communication. In New Zealand, the situation for Māori media representation was worse, as national ideologies during the first decades of mass media regarded the indigenous element as irrelevant to contemporary life or as disruptive to the majority society. There was also little Māori control of media outlets. Most material dealing with positive aspects of Māori culture was scheduled into graveyard slots, and the content was often archival, giving the impression that there was little of contemporary worth in the culture (Fox, 1992; McGregor & Comrie, 1995; Walker, 1990). Such token gestures, however inadequate, were perhaps preferable to other media coverage of Māori issues, much of which was recognised internationally as being racist and biased. The UN Special Rapporteur recommended in 2006 that: “Public media should be encouraged to provide a balanced, unbiased and non-racist picture of Maori in New Zealand society, and an independent commission should be established to monitor their performance and suggest remedial action” (Stavenhagen, 2006: Recommendation 104).

From its inception in the 1920s, broadcasting in New Zealand had been delivered almost exclusively in English and while Māori people could tune in, it was not designed with a Māori audience in mind. New Zealand media scholars point out that until the launch of the Māori

Television Service in 2004, Māori people had been subject to negatively-biased reporting (McCreanor, 1993: 82; Abel, 2008: 113, inter alia), due to a “mainstream news media.. [which acted as] a subtle instrument of alienation and continued colonisation” (Stuart, 2005: 23)<sup>2</sup>. For example, negative portrayals of Māori issues and people were broadcast on the TVNZ news (Television New Zealand, the first national broadcaster), and on the ‘reality’ crime show *Police Ten-7* (2002-). Little investigation of the causes or the background to the story was provided, and potentially positive news stories attracted much less media attention, unless they dealt with ritual or traditional culture. In this way, the non-Māori people (mainly Pākehā) of New Zealand were not exposed to anything unfamiliar or challenging to their cultural experience – and they did not have the opportunity to have a realistic insight into the lives of their Māori compatriots. Neither did Māori audiences have the opportunity to see or to produce their own images of themselves. The reluctance to broadcast material aimed at an audience who were clearly a minority also stems from economic considerations. Even if a programme was made which reflected Māori values, it was often broadcast at an off-peak time, as prime time slots were reserved for ‘popular’ programmes which could draw advertisers. Māori people were effectively ‘invisible’ on national television (Mita, 1996: 45). Māori artist Lisa Reihana sees the lop-sided reflection afforded by TVNZ as a dangerous way to “reinforce Pākehā insecurity and create a lack of confidence in our own culture,” especially if Māori issues are “restricted to one programme and time-slot” (1993: 73). In general the national minority language on national majority media was either ignored (except for special cultural occasions), or afforded limited timeframes and broadcast at off-peak viewing times.

Fairer broadcasting demanded legislative, structural and journalistic reforms (Abel, 2008: 126), and for language activists, the most straightforward way to achieve balance in the national media was to obtain control over a national media outlet<sup>3</sup>. The campaigns in both Ireland and New Zealand which led to legislative and policy change are discussed in Section 2. Speakers of the indigenous national language (as well as people with concurrent cultural sympathies) sought a separate television service as a right, characterised as a civil right in the Gaeltacht context and as a Treaty right in the New Zealand context. Given the strong influence media wields over language and culture, and the ubiquity and domestic character of television, a separate television station was seen as an effective way to enable people to promote and develop their language in a realistic way, achieving immediate impact on a national scale.

### **1.1 Relation between broadcasting and state**

Broadcasting in Ireland and New Zealand was initially modeled on the Reithian principles of public service similar to the BBC. However, as both countries had relatively small populations, it was not economically feasible to fund a complete public broadcasting service from the public coffers or from a licence fee. Whilst retaining the desire to provide a national public service, both TVNZ and

RTÉ were structured to work from a mixed funding model, where some revenue would derive from advertising.

Public broadcasting in Ireland was linked to the state from the outset. In 1926, less than four years after the creation of the Free State, the radio station 2RN began. Radio Éireann was established as the public service state broadcaster by the 1960 Broadcasting Authority Act, and at the end of the following year, television began under the same Act. In 1966 the body was officially titled RTÉ (Radió Teleffis Éireann)<sup>4</sup>. In 1952, Erskine Childers appointed a Council (Comhairle Radió Éireann) to give RTÉ a measure of autonomy from state control (Watson, 2003: 44). Irish audiences currently have ready access to four Irish channels: RTÉ 1 and 2, TG4 and the private channel TV3 (owned by Canadian Mediaworks), as well as four main UK channels: BBC 1, 2, ITV/UTV and Channel 4, first by overspill and now by cable or satellite. There is also significant uptake of SKY and other cable or satellite options. RTÉ broadcasts programmes in Irish on RTÉ 1 and RTÉ Radio One, and is also the umbrella body for Radió na Gaeltachta. A not-for-profit organisation, RTÉ currently derives approximately 50% of its revenue from licence fees and approximately 50% from commercial income (www.rte.ie). In 2002, RTÉ's income from advertising was 70%, the highest percentage of any European public service broadcaster. The licence fee is also low in comparison to European norms (Flynn, 2002: 170-1). The effect of this commercialism "has been to narrow the range of programme material available to an Irish audience... at a time when social, political and cultural change would appear to demand an expansion in perspectives" (Flynn, 2002: 174).

The relation between national ideologies and broadcasting policy in Ireland has been a close one. As Ireland moved out of decades of emigration and unemployment (1930s-50s), state ideology moved towards liberalisation in the 1960s and 1970s, privileging consumer choice and individual rights, with less emphasis on tradition<sup>5</sup>. This approach stemmed from "the failure of the earlier ideology to achieve its national objectives" (Watson, 2003: 88), and was in part driven by a wish to avoid the problems of Northern Ireland, and to join what was regarded as a more cosmopolitan European Community. In response to social movements for Gaeltacht civil rights, Irish-medium education and a second television channel in the late 1970s, the role of the State in relation to broadcasting shifted from "interventionist and protectionist to [being the] guardian of equality and individual choice" (Watson, 2003: 88). A second channel, RTÉ 2, was launched in 1978 after public debate as to its form and purpose. There were three possibilities for the new service: it could be an independent commercial service, a platform for the BBC NI (Northern Ireland), relaying broadcasts to remote areas of Ireland, or a second RTÉ channel. The government chose this last option, giving Irish-speakers cause to hope for more content related to their needs.

Since 1922 a section of the north of Ireland has been officially ruled from Westminster, and considered part of the United Kingdom. This means that official attitudes to the Irish language in



Northern Ireland (the term now commonly given to these six counties) were very different to those in the rest of the country. Until the 1970s, the British government regarded the Irish language as seditious, and afforded it no official recognition. Irish speakers were distrusted by the authorities, and some extremist nationalist groups attempted to hijack the language, associating it with particular political beliefs to the exclusion of others. In this context, it is scarcely surprising that Irish language programming was not considered a priority by the BBC. However, in tandem with political progress, and the success of Welsh language broadcasting initiatives, the British government eventually responded to community pressure and allowed for Irish language content on radio and eventually television<sup>6</sup>. Today, language learning sites and podcasts are available from the BBC website. Residents of Northern Ireland can also receive RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta by overspill, and via the internet<sup>7</sup>. TG4 is available via overspill in some areas, on SKY satellite and ntl: cable, and as of 2005, has been transmitting to the Belfast area from a local site on Divis, although due to overcrowding on the frequency bands, the signal is weak. Local television production as Gaeilge [in the Irish language] in Northern Ireland is encouraged by the Irish Language Broadcast Fund (ILBF), established in 2005 as a sub-section of Northern Ireland Screen<sup>8</sup>.

The New Zealand television environment at present includes six national free-to-air channels. TV3 and C4 are owned by Canadian Mediaworks, Prime is Australian-owned, and TV ONE, TV 2 and Māori Television are under New Zealand ownership (Farnsworth, 2002: 333). These stations operate in competition with each other. Deregulation has resulted in there being no restrictions on advertising or broadcasting hours, and indeed, New Zealand has one of the most deregulated television systems in the world (SPADA, 1996: 6, cited in Lealand, 2000).

In 1961, after television began in New Zealand, the National government introduced the Broadcasting Act whose overall message can be defined as "the acceptance of public as opposed to state broadcasting" (Day, 2000: 38). This was followed by further Broadcasting Acts in 1973 and 1976, which sought to give broadcasters more independence by doing away with ministerial control and giving more power to a public corporate body. The New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation (NZBC) was set up in 1962, under which public broadcasting was financed by a public fee (Farnsworth, 2004: 126-7), and functioned for a majority of New Zealanders as a cohesive force<sup>9</sup>. In 1975, fifteen years after the first television broadcast in New Zealand on Television One, a second broadcasting channel, South Pacific Television was established. Although also owned by the government, this second channel was launched to stimulate competition within the market. As the local market was not large enough to support a fully public service broadcasting system, both channels operated on a hybrid system, involving public funding through the broadcasting license fee as well as commercial funding from advertisers. In 1979 the two were merged to form TVNZ. In the late 1980s a warrant was given to what was to be the first privately owned channel in New Zealand, TV3. As TV3 struggled to become established as a New Zealand broadcaster, the

limitations of a smaller market were again obvious and in response the government loosened constraints on foreign ownership of media. Roger Horrocks (2004a, 2004b), Nick Perry (1994, 2004) and Trisha Dunleavy (2008) have written extensively on the history of New Zealand broadcasting and its attempts to navigate public service ideals in an environment of inadequate public funding. To summarise, five phases of broadcasting were trialled:

1960-1 government broadcasting

1961-88 public service and commercialism

1989-95 TVNZ as commercial broadcaster, with NZoA as public service funding body

1995-9 commercialism dominant<sup>10</sup>

1999-2009 attempt to revive public service broadcasting

(drawn from Horrocks, 2004a: 26).

The effect of these continual changes in policy and funding was to destabilise the idea of public service broadcasting. TVNZ was structured in such a way as to make catering to minorities, even minorities of national importance, very difficult. It was also a challenge to produce local content of any hue.

The deregulation of television in 1989 allowed the state to pull out of its role in cultural management, and to take a position of detachment in frequency management (Farnsworth, 2002: 195). However, a move back in the direction of public service values occurred when, in 2003, the Labour government introduced a Charter which set out a mixed mandate for TVNZ. The Charter was drawn up in consultation with the public and broadcasters to encourage TVNZ to take on more public broadcasting functions, which included supporting more Māori-related programming<sup>11</sup>. To this end, TVNZ was restructured as a Crown Entity in 2003, and received government funding of \$15.1m per year. However, the station was still obliged to pay a dividend to the Crown, which made it difficult to fulfill its public service objectives, and the balance of the "dual system of funding" and ownership was tipped in favour of the commercial. Audiences were figured as "private consumers rather than as citizens with particular representational demands" (Atkinson, 2002: 122). This meant that the viewing wishes of minority groups such as Māori people took second place to those of other groups perceived to have more spending power. Lealand points out that prior to the Charter there was also "no obligation on broadcasters to address particular social or cultural representational demands" (Lealand, 2002: 214). The profit imperative compromised the amount and quality of local content on New Zealand television. Anglophone New Zealanders were denied content which reflected their specificity, but did not have to worry about their language, as many programmes were imported from Australia, America and Britain (Dunleavy, 2005: 2). If the chance of seeing a Kiwi-inflected programme was slim, the chance of seeing programmes reflecting te ao Māori or using te reo was even slimmer. Social activism by Māori groups insisted on the importance

of television catering for particular and local interests, and also emphasised the idea of audience as collectivity or community. This concept had been missing from New Zealand television broadcasting since its very early days, and added a twist to the ideal of public service broadcasting<sup>12</sup>.

## **1.2 Indigenous national language programmes on main national broadcasters**

Although progress has been made since the early days of minimal airtime for indigenous national language programming on TVNZ and RTÉ, it continues to make up a small proportion of overall television broadcast hours (0.4% and 0.9% respectively, in 2009)<sup>13</sup>, and takes second place to English-language material in terms of promotion and scheduling. This section presents the history of indigenous language programming on the first national broadcaster, gives possible reasons for the absence of more comprehensive coverage, and provides an overview of current programming on the stations.

### **Irish [an Ghaeilge] on RTÉ**

Irish language programming on RTÉ was marginalised and minoritised from the beginning, for several different reasons: the location of broadcasting headquarters, a lack of language ability amongst members of the Broadcasting Authority, misguided policy in relation to Irish in RTÉ, and insufficient funding to create visually interesting and creatively risky programmes in the language. The main RTÉ studios were located in the metropolitan east, whereas most native Irish speakers who might be expected to produce credible programming lived at the other extremities of the country. The linguistic abilities of RTÉ staff were under question at some periods in the 1970s and 80s, as the authority, chairman and executive were not always fluent Irish speakers (Watson, 2003: 57). This meant that it was difficult for them to appreciate the need for a more comprehensive Irish language schedule, or to commission programmes which met the needs of their Irish-speaking audience. In protest at the inadequate funding, arcane time slots and limited facilities afforded Irish language programmes, producers Lelia Doolan, Jack Dowling and Bob Quinn resigned from the national broadcaster<sup>14</sup>.

The 1960 Broadcasting Act had reiterated the “national aims” of the country in setting RTÉ the task of “restoring the Irish language and preserving and developing the national culture” (Ireland, 1960: article 17), a task the station failed to fulfill, despite the good record of Irish language programming on radio in the preceding decades<sup>15</sup>. It should nonetheless be noted that although they were few in number, Irish language productions on RTÉ during its first decade were amongst the more challenging programmes on television at the time, as Helena Sheehan remarks: “some of the most biting plays were done in Irish, where it was perhaps possible to do things that could not be done in English” (1987: 99). For example, Mairéad Ní Ghráda’s *An Triail* [The Trial] (RTÉ, 1965), the story of an unmarried mother who has to flee her home town, did not “shrink from showing the darker

recesses of Irish society” (Sheehan, 1987: 99). It seemed possible to do things in Irish that could not have been done in English because fewer people could understand, and challenges to authority were not considered as dangerous when couched in the sacred Gaelic language<sup>16</sup>. This is an example of how the use of a different language can provide a distinctly alternative view to English productions because of the way the language itself is perceived. Despite the challenging content of such early drama, the general trend in RTÉ from the 1970s on was less than innovative.

At the beginning of Telefís Éireann, the television wing of RTÉ, the weekly programming target was 42 hours, of which two were to be in Irish. By 1969 two hours of Irish-only, and two hours of bilingual programming were being produced (Watson, 2003: 54). By 1975, however, the Irish language output of RTÉ had dropped to an all-time low of 2.8% of all broadcast hours, and by 1980 RTÉ was importing more foreign programmes than any other station in the then European Community [now the European Union] (Ó Ceallaí, 1980: 2). Hazelkorn (1995: 103) and Watson (1997: 220) track the low proportion of Irish language programming up until the 1990s, where at its worst stage, there was only a single 5-minute daily news bulletin in summer. During the decade 1985-95, Irish language programming represented 2% of the total hours broadcast by RTÉ.

RTÉ’s so-called ‘diffusion policy’ saw Irish language programming and phrases speckled across the schedule without strategic force. The policy, begun in the late 1960s, was intended to normalise the use of the language by making it palatable to non-fluent viewers, but it actually betrayed a refusal to deal with the specific challenges posed by broadcasting in a minority language to a majority audience. Some referred to it as the ‘confusion’ policy, such was its inefficacy (Watson, 2003: 55). Pádhraic Ó Ciardha expresses the image portrayed of the language at this time as “an old fellow in a tweed jacket reading the news... Soviet style” (Ó Ciardha, 1997, quoted in Gogan, 1997: 16). This is mirrored by the limited way *te reo* was presented on New Zealand television, described by John Rangihau as: “Sunday morning slots with old people, boringly sitting behind a desk or talking at length on a *marae*” (Rangihau, 1997: 107). As the decades went on, RTÉ continued to take a stereotypical view of Irish-speakers (despite the success of the revoiced German series for children *Scéalaíocht Janosch* and the arts programme *Cúrsaí Ealaíne*), putting low-cost shows on Network Two for small ‘special interest’ audiences (Watson, 2003: 81)<sup>17</sup>. Although 14-26% respondents to a survey watched Irish language or bilingual programmes “nearly every week” on RTÉ 1 in 1983 (Ó Riagáin & Ó Gliasáin, 1994), by 1993, the broadcaster had moved all regular Irish language programmes to the less popular Network 2 [RTÉ 2]. The great generic lacuna in Irish-language programming limited the way that non-speakers perceived the language, as they saw it almost exclusively in informational contexts and not with any regularity in other genres, such as entertainment. Also, the lack of visual innovation in low-budget studio programmes meant they were less likely to attract non-Irish-speakers (Watson: 2003: 120). More importantly, Irish speakers were not being adequately served by the national broadcaster.

Even in the 1980s, most RTÉ producers did not have Irish, and many were blind to the alternative possibilities for programme-making afforded by the language (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010)<sup>18</sup>. Things began to change when Cathal Goan was made Head of Irish Programming in 1990. He brought in new producers, such as Sheila De Courcy and Ferdia MacAnna who were energetic, innovative and fluent in Irish. Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin, who was also involved in pioneering Irish-language programming in RTÉ around this time, notes that Goan realised the freedom a minority language could afford the producers: “bhí i bhfad níos mó saoirse ag an bhfoireann ná mar a bhí ag an dream a bhí ag obair ar na cláir Bhéarla” [the team had much more freedom than the people working in English-language programmes] (Mac Dhonnagáin, quoted in Ní Chéilleachair, 2004)<sup>19</sup>. However, the aborted project of the 1960s was not to be revived and developed. Irish-language programmes were still given less airtime and support than English-language ones, as Mac Dhonnagáin notes in the case of *Cúrsaí* (a current affairs show which began in 1987): “bhí na hacmhainní bunúsach go leor. Ní raibh mórán tacaíochta taobh istigh de RTÉ dó” [the resources were pretty basic. There was not much support for it within RTÉ] (Mac Dhonnagáin, quoted in Ní Chéilleachair, 2004).

However, in the decade prior to the launch of TnaG, RTÉ’s Irish-language output, although generically limited, was of high quality. *Léargas* and *Cúrsaí*, both factual programmes, circumvented the restrictions of using a minority language in various ways. The present (2010) Commissioning Editor for Irish Language, Multi-Cultural and Educational Programmes, Máiréad Ní Nuadháin, introduced subtitles for *Léargas*, and the documentary series regularly achieved between 20-30% of the RTÉ 1 audience. Since the coming of TG4, for which RTÉ is obliged to provide 365 hours of Irish-language programming per year, there has been a decline in the quantity of Irish language material on RTÉ. RTÉ’s current televisual output in the Irish language is minimal. Irish language news (*Nuacht*) and documentaries total between two and three (out of 148) broadcast hours per week (2009)<sup>20</sup>.

Successive Ministers have remarked on the continuing reluctance on the part of RTÉ to honour their legal obligation to make more than a bare minimum of one Irish language or bilingual programme (Ó Tórna, 2002). Little has changed over the past decade, and in 2008 the Minister for the Gaeltacht, Éamon Ó Cuív, criticised the station for its dereliction of duty in this regard (Ó Garbhí, 2008). Budgetary considerations were cited as the reason for discontinuing the commission of the popular bilingual magazine programme *Pobal*, which was also made by TG4 for RTÉ (Ó Broin, 2008). The series ended in November 2008 (despite viewing figures of 100,000), leaving only one Irish-language programme (*Scannal*, a historical documentary series) in the regular RTÉ schedule apart from the daily news<sup>21</sup>. Irish appears only in the coverage of major political and state events, and then often only in token form. There is no Irish language input to RTÉ Two (the channel aimed at younger viewers).

As Browne has noted, it is not unusual for countries with an ideology of assimilation to use indigenous elements as “snippets of exotica on airwaves” (Browne 2007: 109), without affording real respect to the language and culture. In Ireland, this ‘exotica’ was indigenous, and expressed in limited genres and subjects in the main. Although there were moments of excellence in Irish-language production on RTÉ, their realisation was dependent very much on the vision of the individual broadcasting professionals involved, rather than on the ethos of the station itself. This ethos was for many decades subject to a national ideology which regarded the Irish language as the lost heritage of everybody, without recognition of its also being the living medium of communication of a minority.

### **Te reo on TVNZ**

Unlike Ireland, where the national indigenous language was given prominence in the early days of radio, and at least symbolic presence on television, New Zealand did not afford much respect to the Māori language in the media, which reflected majority attitudes to the language in daily life<sup>22</sup>. In the 1980s, radio stations would not play what they considered the “foreign language” songs of Moana Maniapoto, which she attributes to the “hostility or complete indifference towards Māori” in New Zealand society at that time (Maniapoto, 2009). Whilst the Crown has recognised (since the High Court ruling in 1991) that it has an obligation to provide some Māori programming on ‘mainstream’ television, programmes in te reo are few and far between<sup>23</sup>.

Although the presence of te reo on ‘mainstream’ television has increased since the first 1980 screening on Television New Zealand (TVNZ) of *Koha*, a weekly half-hour bilingual Māori magazine programme, and occasional greetings in Māori are heard on television and radio, the language remains indisputably marginal on TV and RadioNZ. It was the (under-resourced) Māori Television Unit, established in TVNZ in 1980, which began *Koha* and the news programme *Te Kāreere*<sup>24</sup>. Of symbolic significance, *Te Kāreere* began in primetime on TVNZ in 1983, with a running time of four minutes<sup>25</sup>. In the face of opposition from Pākehā colleagues, Derek Fox and Whai Ngata of the Māori Television Unit persisted and made incremental progress over the years so that the programme ran for up to half an hour. However, the programme was regularly ousted to make room for more ‘important’ coverage, such as cricket. *Te Kāreere* took a different approach to the studio tradition of talking heads, as the crew travelled around the country to speak to rural people, the actual people affected by the stories (Koopu, interview 2008). Bilingual crews reported on Māori and non-Māori stories. As Ngata points out, the aim of *Te Kāreere* was not so much to preserve the language, but rather to “to put out the news that would be of importance to Māori and to do it in the Māori language” (Ngata, 2010, on Whiteside, 2010). The distinction is important, because although political support for Māori media was eventually achieved by recourse to the Treaty-based argument that te reo as taonga was entitled to Crown protection, in fact, the purpose of indigenous broadcasting is not limited to considerations of language.

Early *Koha* staff members “felt an obligation to speak directly to Māori with an authentic voice, refusing to water down or simplify the messages for the mainstream palate” (Reweti, 2006: 180). Debra Reweti saw the programme as a foot in the door, a way to “grab the audience in an academic headlock... to ensure Māori stories were listened to and appreciated” (2006: 180). *Koha*'s effect was however limited, as it constituted less than 1% of total programmed hours across the two TVNZ channels<sup>26</sup>. Management insisted that it use less than 2% te reo, in order to “appeal to a majority viewing audience” (Paul-Robie, interview 2009). Nonetheless, Dunleavy points out that, as there were but two public television channels during the 1980s, most New Zealanders were likely to encounter either or both of these Māori-content programmes (2008: 802). Whilst Dunleavy sees this as a contribution to biculturalism, it should be noted that some non-Māori viewers resisted cultural adventure. TVNZ received calls in 1986 calling for an end to *Koha* and *Te Kārere* (or to subtitle the latter), and some complainants also suggested that Māori be given their own channel (Reweti, 2006: 181)<sup>27</sup>. Māori media practitioners and international observers have noted the vituperative reaction of anglophone audiences to te reo content on TVNZ in the 1980s (Fishman, 1991: 84; Ngata, 2010 on Whiteside, 2010). That such a reaction should be provoked from the tiny proportion of Māori programming on national television demonstrates Pākehā anxieties about the growth of things Māori in the public sphere at this time, despite official pretence to the contrary<sup>28</sup>.

The first Māori television series of significance was the six-part *Tangata Whenua: the People of the Land* (Pacific Films, 1974). Contributors were generous in their discussion of Māori life and culture, and it was on this project that the director Barry Barclay began to formulate some of his ideas about a ‘Fourth Cinema’, using elements from tikanga Māori [Māori cultural values] to make film production culturally sensitive<sup>29</sup>. Whilst Māori audiences were pleased to see something of their world on national screens, the non-Māori were finally exposed to this other way of thinking. According to the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation, the series had a huge effect, having: “possibly done more towards helping the European understand the Māori people, their traditions and way of life, than anything else previously shown on television” (NZBC Annual Report, 1975, cited in Diamond, 2009). *Tangata Whenua* stood alone for many years, however, as there was still no consistent Māori presence on New Zealand television.

In October 1987 Barry Barclay and the group Te Manu Aute called for at least three hours of Māori television drama per year (this in a context where 40 hours of local drama were being produced each year). Barclay remarks that “until the screening on TVNZ of the five-part drama series *E Tipu*, *E Rea* in November 1989, there had not been even five minutes of Maori drama on television in the whole 27 years of the network’s existence. Not Maori drama as we conceive it- drama conceived, executed and presented by Maori [sic]” (Barclay, 1990: 63-4)<sup>30</sup>. Te Manu Aute advocated a particular process, with separate funding and assessment of scripts, operated by a Māori Trust. Although not supported by the ‘mainstream’ at the time, this parallel model foreshadowed the set-

up of Māori Television in 2003, and of Te Paepae Ataata (with the New Zealand Film Commission in 2007). Little occurred in the area of indigenous drama again until *Mataku* (South Pacific Pictures), a supernatural drama series based on Māori legend, was screened on TV3 in 2002. Although the dialogue was mostly in English, some was also in te reo.

A further challenge for those seeking more te reo content on New Zealand screens is that the language forms a small part of the more general 'Māori' content category. The current Māori and Pacific Programmes Department at TVNZ (one of seven departments at the station) has 65 staff (Maxwell, 2009) who work to produce four 'Māori programmes' and one (*Tagata Pasifika*) for Pacific audiences. The Māori programmes are: *Te Kārerere*, *Waka Huia*, *Marae* and *I AM TV*, of which the first two are almost exclusively in te reo, and the second two use the language only incidentally or symbolically<sup>31</sup>. *Te Kārerere* is a daily news programme on TV ONE, with multiple repeats (TVNZ 7 and TVNZ ondemand). The current version of *Te Kārerere* is broadcast in te reo Māori, with English subtitles on the repeats. There are plans to include English subtitles on the first broadcast in the near future (Maxwell, 2009). Its kaupapa and resources come from the Māori and Pacific Programmes Department and the editorial comes from the News Department (Maxwell, 2009). *Waka Huia*, an archival series entirely in te reo, began in 1987 in a Sunday morning timeslot, focussing on tribal specificities of "iwi, tangata [sic], waka and taonga" (www.tvnz.co.nz). Its original one-hour advertisement-free format was modified in January 2008 to 44 minutes with five commercial breaks, demonstrating the tension between an unbroken flow of inter-generational reminiscence/ cultural handover, and the commercial constraints of television. *Marae* is an English-language (although the presenter opens in te reo) current affairs show in the mould of *Koha* (which ended in 1989), broadcast on Sunday morning, following *Waka Huia*. *I AM TV* is a one-hour series aimed at rangatahi [the young] on TV 2. Outside the Māori Department there is little Maori content, even in English, although in summer 2009/2010 TVOne screened a bilingual 'history-reality-survival' series, *One Land*, in which three families are transported back to 1850s Aotearoa<sup>32</sup>.

Whilst progress has been made in the last decade, several non-Māori presenters on TVNZ continue to mispronounce words in te reo, which causes confusion and offence, especially when personal names are subject to disrespectful enunciation (Forsman, 2006; Poihipi, 2007: 11). When the popular television soap *Shortland Street* included some reo (when a Māori family, the Hudsons, became central characters in 2001), it was recognised by the programme's Māori advisor Ngamaru Raerino as "a big shift for mainstream television" (Raerino, 2006). However, even more than twenty years after the first screening of *Koha*, some of the non-Māori audience has still struggled to accept the presence of te reo on national television. It is clear that the hostility and fear of the majority population has retarded the development of Māori media in New Zealand, although when programmes were made which took a sensitive approach to Māori matters, such as *Tangata Whenua*, the 'mainstream' audience reacted with interest. Any consideration of te reo in the New



Zealand media is bound up with issues of Māori culture in general, because the two are intertwined. In Ireland, aspects of the indigenous culture were already being represented on screen in the English language, whereas in New Zealand, Māori culture was notable in its absence from the national public sphere. This meant that Māori people sought improved media representation for both language and culture. The work done within TVNZ in terms of Māori content related to both language and culture helped to prepare the ground for the more varied mediascape of today.

## **2 History of TG4 and Māori Television**

*“We moved quick and sudden in our own country”* (Heaney, 1966)

Although TG4 and Māori Television have each grown from a distinct linguistic, political and cultural environment, there are parallels between the approaches of those campaigning for a television service in each country, and the response of their respective governments. In both cases, the timeline (from initial idea to first broadcast) is similar, as the campaigns stretched over around three decades (1960s/70s- 1990s/2000s). The issues at stake are also comparable: rights (civil rights and Treaty rights), (national) identity and cultural revitalisation. Reasons for particular government responses to the demand for media services in both the minority languages include a concern for votes, the self-image of the country and issues of nationhood, and the failure of existing broadcasters to fulfill a stated public service framework. In New Zealand, the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi compelled the government to actively promote the Māori language as a taonga. The sociolinguistic context, set out in Chapter 1, was also similar for the Irish language in Ireland and te reo Māori in New Zealand: political lipservice, use of the language in cultural tourism and national identity, and contemporary grassroots educational developments. Given these similarities, this section sets out the respective histories of the two channels, and compares the strategies and campaigns used in their establishment.

### **2.1 TG4/ Teilifís na Gaeilge**

The origins of TG4 are a mixture of community activism and a personal commitment on the part of the then Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Michael D. Higgins, combining civil rights and cultural elements. According to Minister Higgins, “the original idea of setting up Teilifís na Gaeilge as it was, was to address a rights issue, the right to communicate, and also it was as a component of public service broadcasting” (interview 2001). When the channel, then named Teilifís na Gaeilge, made its first broadcast on Hallow E’en night, 1996, the opening ceremonies - a blend of traditional and modern dance, fireworks and Afro-Celt rhythms - set the tone for what was to follow: a new perspective on Irish language, culture, people and society.

The Irish situation is a “rather anomalous example of minority language broadcasting” (Cormack, 2000b: 394), because the language has been nominally supported by the state for several decades and yet remains spoken only by a minority. It is also anomalous in that the campaign for an Irish

language television station took longer than similar movements in other countries. Minority language groups in continental Europe such as Basques and Catalans had set up television stations as soon as it was legally possible<sup>33</sup>. The delay in Ireland was partly due to the predominance of English in the sense of universal lingua franca in almost all social domains in the country, which meant that Irish was not commercially necessary. Whilst the ubiquity of a dominant language is common to all minority language media campaigns, the problem was exacerbated in the Irish broadcasting environment, where high quality English-language programming from the BBC was also widely received. A more important reason for the delay in establishing a stand-alone Irish language media service was the symbolic status of Irish. As the language was seen as a national attribute, the creation of a separate channel would involve official recognition of its separate and minority status, and admission of the failure of the existing State channels to meet their legal and ethical or moral requirements. As Ó hÍfearnáin says, it is “impossible to separate the status and development of Irish in the broadcast media from the shifting nature of the state's relationship with the language and the people who speak it” (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000: 92). There is a strong parallel with the situation of Māori in New Zealand in the problematic connection between the indigenous language and national orthodoxy in the twentieth century, although the relation between language and state is very different to that of Ireland, as *te reo* is linked to a Māori cultural identity which exceeds the ‘nation’.

The campaign for a specifically Irish station dates back to the late 1950s, when Gael Linn<sup>34</sup>, backed by an American broadcasting company, made an abortive bid to establish and operate Ireland's first television channel, but it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that real progress was made<sup>35</sup>. Various groups, including people from inside RTÉ itself, began to argue for a Gaeltacht channel, to serve the needs of a neglected community (Doolan, Dowling & Quinn, 1969). These efforts were in the context of declining interest in the language amongst younger Gaeltacht dwellers, and also in reaction to the overly commercial character of RTÉ. It should be noted that there were two strands to the campaign for Irish language broadcast media: one involving Gaeltacht people (who spoke Irish in their community as an everyday language) and one Irish-speakers from outside the Gaeltacht (who were interested in the language as an important marker of personal and/ or national identity)<sup>36</sup>. Whilst there were differences in their approach and in the type of media service they envisaged, the groups eventually joined together to form a stronger lobby. Having failed to effect change in the RTÉ schedule by request, these groups took protest action in a campaign of civil disobedience drawing on tactics used by the Welsh language activists of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* [Welsh Language Society] in their quest to establish S4C (Hourigan, 2007). Youngsters climbed the RTÉ mast in December 1976, and in March 1977 seven *Conradh na Gaeilge* members chained themselves to the GPO (the General Post Office, the iconic location of the 1916 Declaration of Independence) (Watson, 2003: 78; Hourigan, 2007: 75). Two members of *Freagra*<sup>37</sup> invaded a live news broadcast on RTÉ and were arrested (Ó Feinneadhá, 1995, cited by

Hourigan, 2003: 100; Corcoran, 2004: 181). Several people refused to pay their television licence fees on the grounds that they were not receiving a proper public service. Between 1977 and 1993, fifteen people were imprisoned as part of this campaign (Ní Chionnaith, 2008: 30). The government responded by amending the legislation, so that the licence fee was payable no matter what service was received (1987 Amendment to the Broadcasting Act). This indicates the intransigence of the government in regard to Irish language media provision, although it is ironic to note that *Conradh na Gaeilge* continued to receive state funding at the time.

In March 1969, language and civil rights activists picketed RTÉ's *Quicksilver*, an English-language quiz show which was filmed in the Gaeltacht area of Teach Furbo, Co. Galway. Shortly afterwards *Gluaiseacht Cearta Sibhialta na Gaeltachta* [Gaeltacht Civil Rights Movement] was formed to continue the campaign for separate Irish-language media<sup>38</sup>. In 1970, the pirate radio station *Saor Raidió Chonamara* [Free Radio Connemara] began broadcasting. This led to the establishment of *Raidió na Gaeltachta* [Gaeltacht Radio] in 1972. It was set up under Section 21 of the 1960 Broadcasting Authority Act, which allowed RTÉ to establish limited companies, obviating the need for government approval. This approach was later used to facilitate the establishment of *TnaG*.

The emergence of indigenous language radio may be seen as a precursor to television. Certainly, the success of *Raidió na Gaeltachta* (*RnaG*) encouraged activists for a television service. *RnaG* is remarkable for being the first national initiative to function through Irish and to be controlled mainly by Gaeltacht people (Coleman, 2003: 181). According to Coleman, its radical force lay in the way it combined local voices with international stories. By situating the local in relationship with the wider world, the station redefined 'local' as outward-looking autonomy, rather than hemmed-in parochialism<sup>39</sup>. Coleman admires the manner in which *RnaG* maintained continuity with the 'traditional' by using broadcast technology in ways that suited the needs of the listeners, with song, satire and other local modes of discourse (Coleman, 2003: 183-4).

Now that Gaeltacht radio had been established, attention turned to a more national television project, in which many non-Gaeltacht speakers of Irish were also involved. Four years after *RnaG* began, *Saoránaigh ar son Feabhasú Craolacháin* [Citizens for Better Broadcasting] was founded, with a view to achieving the same thing for television, and following a *Conradh na Gaeilge* conference on Celtic minority language broadcasting in 1980, *Coiste ar son Teilifís Ghaeltacha* [Committee for Gaeltacht Television] was set up. RTÉ had commissioned a report from the Advisory Committee on Irish Language Broadcasting (March 1977) about how it might increase its Irish language content, but had not implemented its recommendations (Watson, 2003: 79, Kelly-Holmes, 2001: 22). Although they were not initially published, the findings of this Advisory Committee Report were included in another report some ten years later, from the Working Group on Irish Language Television Broadcasting. This second report (to the Ministers for the Gaeltacht and

Communications) explored the possible options for Irish language television broadcasting. There were three main ideas: blocking time for Irish programmes on RTÉ; mixing Irish and English programmes across the schedule; or establishing another channel. In general, national unity was seen as more important than minority rights, and a separate channel was not recommended on the grounds that it could ghettoise the language (Watson, 2003: 81). However, as S4C was successfully showing both Welsh and English programming at that time, this argument seems specious, and it is more likely that RTÉ were afraid of competition for advertising revenue.

The question of finance often arose as a reason not to establish a separate television service. Donncha Ó hÉallaithe and other activists went so far as to visit the Faroe Islands in 1986 to see how television could be produced in a remote area using low-cost methods. The finest moment of Meitheal Oibre Theilifís na Gaeltachta [Gaeltacht TV Working Group] was their 18-hour transmission (using both pre-recorded and live material) from Ros Muc during Oireachtas na nGael [cultural festival] in November 1987. The pirate station, which broadcast over a 15 mile radius, demonstrated that broadcasting in Irish need not be expensive, and generated great hope and excitement that a permanent station would begin. In late 1987, the then Minister for the Gaeltacht and Taoiseach [head of government] Charles Haughey promised £500,000 of lottery money to a new station to be called Teilifís na Gaeltachta. Encouraged by the 1988 government amnesty for pirate broadcasting, Feachtas Náisiúnta Teilifíse (FNT) [National Television Campaign] was formed in 1989, when Meitheal Oibre Theilifís na Gaeltachta joined with Dublin groups. This resulted in a shift in focus: no longer was the campaign for a Gaeltacht service, but rather for an Irish-language service to reach the whole nation (Watson, 2003: 86). FNT was in Hourigan's terms a 'social movement', with which politicians were obliged to interact<sup>40</sup>.

Around this time, Údarás na Gaeltachta (the Gaeltacht development authority) began its long-term training strategy, so that skilled personnel would be ready for the forthcoming station. There was still public debate about whether there should be a separate television service for Irish-speakers. Arguments were made for the integration of the TnaG service on Network Two (RTÉ's second channel) as a face-saving and more cost-effective measure, but it was imperative to the activists that the new venture be seen as a separate entity from the somewhat dull Montrose-led status quo<sup>41</sup>. Even amongst those who supported the idea of a separate television service, there were differences of opinion as to its purpose. Changes in the proposed name of the station illustrate evolving conceptions of its imagined audience. The station was called Teilifís na Gaeltachta [Gaeltacht TV] in the original plans, envisaged as providing a regional community service along the lines of Radio na Gaeltachta; then TnaG [Irish language TV] for its launch, as it addressed Irish-language speakers outside the Gaeltacht; and finally in 1999 TG4 (Teilifís na Gaeilge 4), asserting its power to gain a national viewership in the same field as RTÉ.

Haughey commissioned Údarás na Gaeltachta to carry out a feasibility study for an Irish language television service in 1988. The following year, the station (then titled Teilifís na Gaeltachta) was declared one of the top priorities of the new government. However, despite Haughey's presidential address at his party's March Ard Fheis [annual meeting] which promised broadcasting by 1992, funding was withheld in 1991 due to cutbacks in government spending. The subsequent coalition Labour/Fianna Fáil government finally acted. The Programme for Partnership in Government (1992) involved a Labour and Fianna Fáil promise to create a Gaeltacht-based national television channel. Although the project had all-party support, it was not until later in 1993, when Michael D. Higgins was made Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht (1993-7) that significant progress was made. Although Minister Higgins was strongly in favour of the station, and all political parties had officially expressed support, there were further delays in setting up TnaG, as certain elements in the government were reluctant to fund it - even when money became available. Higgins removed the RTÉ cap on advertising in 1993, which released £16 million/ €20, 316,000, of which he managed to keep £4.5 million for the new station against the wishes of the Department of Finance (Watson: 2003: 109). Important in this was the 'behind the scenes' support of civil servants (many of whom were from the Gaeltacht) for the new television service, as they could liaise between Departments (Watson, 2003: 98).

As the language was held in such polarised esteem by many people in the country, the concept of a separate television station generated strong feeling on both sides. Public critique surfaced in other media in early 1993 when the government decided to allocate funding, and although there seemed to be public support in principle - a telepoll on the popular Gay Byrne radio show demonstrated 60% of callers in favour of the station<sup>42</sup> and an *Evening Echo* poll showed 80% in favour (Watson: 2003: 112) - the question of finance was often raised as a way to dismiss the project. Several journalists wrote savagely about the folly of creating a "white elephant" (McWeeney, 1995) or "a life support system for the dead" (Myers, 1995), which would divert public funds into an arcane minority interest at the expense of locally-made English language programmes (Kenny, 1995). Politicians and lobby groups were to be found on both sides of the argument, although most of the former avoided speaking against the idea of an Irish-language broadcaster publicly, in case it might reflect badly on their patriotism or cost them the votes of Irish speakers. As a means of persuading the less enthusiastic, Michael D. Higgins appealed to a sense of national identity, relating Irish to the national and the cultural (and to the Constitutional and statutory aspirations in respect of the language), and adverting to civil rights:

We are at a crossroads in relation to the impact of technology in our lives, particularly in relation to the media. The decision in relation to Teilifís na Gaeilge had to be taken now or a crucial moment affecting citizenship, the Irish language and democracy would be lost forever. The debate about TnaG is about national self-respect. (Higgins, 1996)

Although few could argue with the symbolic importance of the language, many were reluctant to invest in a minority media service. An interim 'solution' was to delay the beginning of the station.

Higgins nevertheless established two advisory committees in April 1993, one to cover content and the other to investigate technical issues (Corcoran, 2004: 184). Both comprised FNT members, independent producers from Gaeltacht areas, and representatives of the social partners, including RTÉ. It is unlikely that a television service could have happened without state support, but some were disappointed at the toothlessness and nation-friendliness of TnaG, when it might have been a more radical regional broadcaster. In setting up the station, public meetings were held all over the country, encouraging a variety of views and striving to avoid an imposed decision. However, the final say was had by non-Gaeltacht people, and the television service designed primarily to meet their needs. Donncha Ó hÉallaithe, Irish language activist and academic, was unhappy with the representation on the 1993 technical committee, pointing out that eight of the thirteen members were Dublin-based (1994, 1997). Ó hÉallaithe believes that during the later phases of the campaign for Irish language television, the native speakers were sidelined:

[bhí] an taobh Gaeltachta den feachtas ar iarraidh.. gearraithe amach.. agus bhí sé sin déanta d'aon ghnó. [the Gaeltacht element of the campaign [was] missing... and this was done on purpose] (Ó hÉallaithe, quoted in Watson, 1997: 104)

Nonetheless, in the following year, Comhairle Theilifís na Gaeilge (advisory body for TnaG) was formed, and by December 1993, the idea of TnaG became a practical reality.

After further false starts and changes of plan, Teilifís na Gaeilge was officially launched on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1996, at an estimated capital cost of £17.35 million, and with a core group of thirty staff at the Baile na hAbhann headquarters in Co. Galway.

## **2.2 Whakaata Māori/ Māori Television Service**

*New Zealand has for the first time a serious, well-funded television channel which reflects the language, the culture, the heritage, the perspectives and the aspirations of Māoridom. In doing that it also celebrates our maturing as a nation, celebrating our diversity and our uniqueness.*  
(Clark, 2004)

At the launch of the Māori Television Service in 2004, then Prime Minister Helen Clark focused on the place of the Māori broadcaster within the nation, emphasising unity in diversity. It is an interesting starting point for a station which had encountered continual impediments and obfuscation from representatives of the nation/ Crown throughout the campaign to establish a separate television service. Over a period of three decades (1970s-90s), grassroots activism, headed by student and community groups, put pressure on the New Zealand government to provide substantive recognition for the Māori language. Whilst the specific issue of a television station only emerged later in the 1990s, it should be seen as part of a more general demand for a greater respect and support for Māori language and culture.

Although Māori language and culture had long been exploited as tourist attractions, there was a lack of institutional support for their day-to-day use. This disinterest, following on from the active

suppression of the language by the anglophone majority over a century, resulted in an inter-generational hiatus, where te reo was not passed on to the children or grandchildren of fluent speakers<sup>43</sup>. In the 1970s, this 'deprived' generation began to seek out their heritage. International artistic success meant a greater confidence in Māori achievement and potential which spilled over into the cultural and political sphere, in a dynamic period of Māori renaissance<sup>44</sup>. The activist student group Ngā Tamatoa, set up in Auckland in 1972, contributed to a politicisation of Māori people (Walker, 1996: 83-4). Other groups of the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as the Te Reo Māori Society, also demonstrated in public arenas, and the methods they chose to make their case included marches, petitions and legal action, with a spirit ranging from righteous anger to a general appeal to a sense of national or bi-national identity. These actions represented a drive for recognition as citizens with a different culture to the one officially promoted. Māori people called for the Treaty of Waitangi to be honoured. Huirangi Waikerepuru and others of Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i Te Reo Incorporated and the New Zealand Māori Council brought a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1985 (Te Rito, 2008). In their claim (Te Reo Māori Claim (WAI 11)) they argued that te reo Māori was a taonga under the terms of the Treaty, and as such deserved Crown recognition and protection. The Tribunal held that te reo was indeed guaranteed protection under Article 2 of the Treaty and in 1987 the government responded by promulgating the Māori Language Act.

In 1991, when the Broadcasting Act was amended to allow complete foreign ownership of New Zealand television channels (Lealand, 2001: 452), Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i Te Reo Inc with Sir Graham Latimer for the New Zealand Māori Council lodged a claim in the High Court to stop this. The claimants' main argument was that according to the Treaty the New Zealand government had no right to sell off the national airwaves. Whilst the High Court refused relief in respect of radio assets, the television assets claim was adjourned so that the Crown might submit a plan for the protection of te reo Māori if the assets were transferred. In 1991 the Cabinet made an agreement and undertaking to the High Court that funding would be set aside for the purpose of promoting Māori language and culture in broadcasting. Satisfied with the undertaking, the High Court allowed the transfer of television assets. This was appealed by the New Zealand Māori Council and Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i te reo Māori in 1992. All of these actions were demanding of the parties' energy and resources, but the appellants' legal team (led by Dame Sian Elias and Martin Dawson) worked pro bono and the group were also supported by their community, some of the costs being met by an iwi radio-thon<sup>45</sup>. When this appeal failed, they then appealed to the Privy Council in London, which was at that time the highest court of appeal for the ex-colony. Although the claim was eventually dismissed, the 1993 Privy Council judgement stressed the previous undertakings given by the Crown to the Courts, and observed that the Crown is obliged, by virtue of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, to take such steps as are reasonable to assist in the preservation of the Māori language (New Zealand, 2003: Preamble). The Broadcasting Act was further amended to establish

Te Reo Whakapuaki Irirangi, which operates under the name Te Māngai Pāho, and administers funding for Māori language broadcast projects<sup>46</sup>.

The 1992 outdoor, multi-camera coverage of Te Matatini festival (kapa haka competitions) in Ngāruawahia was intended to be used as a showcase for Maori talent and expertise, to convince ministers to support a Māori television service. Ariki Productions organised the first ever co-production broadcast on both TVOne and TV3<sup>47</sup>. Using equipment borrowed from TV3 and an OB Unit from Video Masters (now called Digital Masters), Ariki presented the New Zealand public with “kapa haka as it was never seen before” (Koopu, interview 2008). Many groups were shown – not simply the top level handful. It was the “first programme by Māori, for Māori, about a Māori event” (Koopu, interview 2008), and was affirmed by the Māori Queen as the best ever coverage of the event: “kua piki koutou ki te taumata me te mahi rangatira” [you [the production crew] have climbed to great heights with this wonderful work] (Te Arikinui Dame Te Atairangikaahu on DVD 1).

However, TVNZ continued to show scant respect for Māori content. In protest at the sidelining of Te Kārerere in favour of mainstream sports coverage in the early 1990s, Māori activists led by Ken Mair entered the TVOne news studio to peacefully disrupt a live news broadcast (*Tātou Tātou*, Greenstone Pictures, 2004). This was a more visible manifestation of the frustration many Māori people felt at the inadequate service New Zealand broadcasting provided. Behind the scenes, further action was going on. In 1996, a joint Māori/Crown working party on Māori Television produced two reports recommending substantive developments in Māori broadcasting policy. During this year, a Māori Television pilot began. Whilst the name suggests a network (or plans to expand into one), in fact this pilot scheme involved one broadcasting outlet, with a small transmission reach. Initially funded for three months by Te Māngai Pāho (Mane-Wheoki, 2005: 66), the pilot scheme persisted for almost four times as long. As a result of goodwill on the part of production crew who worked for next to nothing, Aotearoa Television Network (ATN) broadcast for a year on a temporary broadcast licence, ending in winter 1997. Around seventeen programmes were made in several genres, both in studio and on location, with an overall te reo content of 60%. International programming also drew a varied immigrant audience who were not being catered for by TVNZ. The weakness of the transmitter meant that the number of people who could receive these broadcasts was very limited (estimated to be 7,000-16,000 (Ministry of Commerce, 1997: 7)), and reached mostly people who could not speak te reo. This meant that although a new indigenous service was being provided, it was not reaching its full potential audience<sup>48</sup>.

At the launch of ATN on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 1996, the Prime Minister Jim Bolger spoke of “the importance of a language to a people” and recognised that it is often “harder to get people to recognise success... [than to] condemn, to identify failure” (Bolger, on DVD 2)<sup>49</sup>. This speech foreshadowed the nature



of much subsequent mainstream media interest in the venture. Controversy surrounded the end of ATN. In February 1997, there were allegations that director Tukoroirangi Morgan misused ATN funds. There was more scandal in June, when it was revealed that he had approached other television channels to sell his story. Ironically, exponentially more people could read about the demise of ATN than could have actually seen its broadcasts. It is claimed that ATN was set up to fail, underfunded and without a long-term plan (Walker, 2004; Burns, 1997). For example, the recording equipment was hired rather than purchased – a sensible idea for a short-term venture of a few months, but not financially canny for a 12-month operation. Reweti reminds us that TV3 also failed initially, and remarks that damage was done to the people who had genuinely and in good faith contributed to the ATN experiment (Reweti, 2006: 185). However, as Pihama et al (1997) point out, ATN successfully achieved its function as a pilot, and the Minister recognised that the contractual requirements of programming were exceeded (Reedy, 1997, on DVD 2). Although the ‘network’ was no more, positive effects of the ATN venture continued. Technical skills had been pressed into the service of a strong belief in the possibility and necessity of Māori-based television broadcasting. People who worked in ATN have continued to work in the industry. As well as continuity of personnel, there is also, to a certain degree, continuity of content. The ATN model of combining local programming with an international dimension appears to have been taken as a template for the Māori Television Service.

In 1997 National Māori Organisations reported on Māori broadcasting<sup>50</sup>, and laid out the ‘three planks’ of a comprehensive broadcasting policy: (1) mainstreaming (gradually increasing Māori content at peak times, raising mana, showing the relevance of the language, and “providing a Māori view of the world in its full complexity” (Ministry of Commerce, 1997: 7)), (2) stand-alone television, defined as “a separate television channel, whose assets are owned and managed by Māori and whose programming is determined by Māori, subject to appropriate accountability arrangements both to Māori and Crown” (Ministry of Commerce, 1997: 7), and (3) Māori radio. Almost all the contributors from the field of Māori production expressed a wish for devolved regional opt-outs to enable iwi-specific programming (1997: 9). The Ministry of Commerce discussion document on Māori Television policy was also released in 1997. This looked at the most cost-effective way to provide a Māori Television Service. Guidelines laid out by the Ministry required that the new station broadcast five hours per day in te reo (three prime-time and three first-run), operate from leased premises in Auckland and reach a national audience. From the planning stages it was clear that funding would be minimal, and not commensurate with the skills and effort of the people working to launch the broadcasting outlet. The report remarked that “all options should be explored including availability of second-hand equipment, if available” (Ministry of Commerce, 1997), and that, whilst staff were to be sought “at the lowest practical level - applying a common sense, market driven, approach to the salary rates” it was recognised that “some adjustment to these numbers may be necessary to provide for "special" circumstances - particular

proficiency in Māori language or culture or specific management skills and experience” (Ministry of Commerce, 1997). A note of realism was also injected, as the report recognised that staff would be multi-tasking: “Given the way the staffing assignments have been applied to this model - these will be busy people” (Ministry of Commerce, 1997). This indicates that the government was aware of the inadequacy of the proposed funding.

The failure of ATN continued to have an impact on discourses surrounding Māori Television, and Walker remarks on the mass media fostering negative attitudes (2004: 376). In 1998, the Ministry of Economic Development included a question about how Māori Television would differ from ATN on its ‘Maori Broadcasting: Questions and Answers’ document, in a response to the negative publicity engendered by its end. Safeguards to avoid a repeat of the earlier failure included guaranteed funding for three years (after which the effectiveness of the station was to be reviewed), and the establishment of a Trust to manage the assets for a nationwide Māori broadcaster (Ministry of Economic Development, 1998). In the same year, the government agreed to the establishment of a Māori Television Trust and to that end, set up a working group to develop a report on possible ways to set-up and run the station.

Although part of a national strategy to revitalise te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, and declared a ‘government priority’ in 2000, the establishment of a Māori Television channel was further delayed on the grounds that the government wanted time to review the funding proposal. Walker (2004: 372-3) provides a detailed account of the blows and parries between Māori Television planners and government representatives during this period. The responsibility for advising on Māori broadcasting policy advice was transferred from the Ministry of Commerce to Te Puni Kōkiri. Invited Māori broadcasting experts formed the Māori Broadcasting Advisory Committee (MBAC), and presented a report to the Minister of Māori Affairs in October 2000. This report highlighted the struggle to bring Māori programming to air in New Zealand, and made recommendations for improvement. The stated vision of the MBAC was to achieve “a secure comprehensive and widespread Māori media presence that has become a normal part of New Zealand life” (MBAC, 2000: 3)<sup>51</sup>. The report focused on five imperatives which would compel generosity on the part of the government: (1) that the protection and promotion of te reo was consonant with a Treaty right and judicial recommendation, (2) that providing a television service in te reo had strategic value in gaining votes for the government and (3) was in line with existing policies in relation to language, (4) that a Māori channel would contribute to national goals for broadcasting local content, and (5) that support for the language of the indigenous people would be a move towards democratic and demographic justice. In conclusion, the Report held that government support of Māori broadcasting was political common sense (MBAC, 2000: 9-10). The MBAC report also clarified the three principles behind the drive for Māori broadcasting, stating that whilst government views had been narrow and largely language-focused, “Māori interests congruent with the matter of broadcasting

have been broad based; namely, the desire to protect and promote *te reo me ona tikanga*, *and* participate in the established broadcasting industry, *and* develop broadcasting from a Māori cultural context” (MBAC, 2000: 11).

The following year (2001), discussions began with key Māori stakeholders (Te Awhiorangi [Te Reo Māori Television Trust] and Te Pūtahi Paoho [the Māori Electoral College]) and in December, the Māori Television Service Bill was read to the House (the Minister referring to Ireland *inter alia* as a leader in the field of indigenous language broadcasting (Horomia, 2001)). Among the ‘key principles for the establishment of the Māori Television Service’, it is stated that “together, the Crown and Māori have a Treaty obligation in preserving, protecting and promoting *te reo Māori*” (TPK, 2001). Once more, language was emphasised as the *raison d’être* of the television service. Operational and programme funding for the Service was confirmed, and an interim Māori Television board of directors was set up. This group communicated with service providers, production houses and Te Mangai Pāho, and designed detailed criteria for programme formats. It also negotiated with TVNZ about scheduling and access to (and ownership of) archival material. Concern continued about the logistics of broadcasting, and politicians debated the relative merits of possible cost-effective VHF (to be leased from CanWest) as opposed to the more limited range of UHF frequencies (Coddington, 2002). The indefatigable efforts of Derek Fox in the area of reception and audience reach prior to the launch of the station are ably outlined by Walker (2004: 370-377). By 2003, additional operational funding for the television services was confirmed, and on 7th May in that year, the Labour Government enacted the Māori Television Service Act (Te Aratuku Whakaata Irirangi Māori) 2003, establishing the Māori Television Service and its funding. Finally, on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2004, Māori Television made its first broadcast<sup>52</sup>.

### **2.3 Comparison of Irish and Māori campaigns for a separate television station**

The differences in the campaigns for an indigenous national television service in Ireland and New Zealand are due to the very different conceptions of the nation and the place of the indigenous (language) minority in it, as outlined in Chapter 1.

Whilst in both countries, government support for a separate indigenous language broadcasting service was not initially forthcoming, despite the supposed official status of the language in law, different approaches were taken to obtain state funding. Māori campaigners fought a protracted legal battle to get access to the national airwaves, but in Ireland it was more a matter of persuasion or lobbying, although some protestors were imprisoned. Because there had been legal recognition for the Irish language in the Constitution (albeit without much effective statutory law), and because the language was connected strongly to national identity, the state could not be seen to reject it. There was also less bureaucracy involved in establishing a new television channel, because of a provision in existing legislation governing the first national broadcaster RTÉ, which allowed it to

set up limited companies. Te reo Māori, on the other hand, had not been officially recognised by the majority in New Zealand as a viable language until 1987, and because of the deregulation of the broadcasting sector, any attempt to establish a national broadcaster in the public service mould necessitated new legislation. As Māori and the Crown are figured as partners in governance under the Treaty of Waitangi, it was also important to set up a shared management model to run the television service, which resulted in innovative approaches to governing and planning. This was not required in the Irish situation (although some Gaeltacht activists would have preferred that). Similarly, in the Māori case, a parallel funding structure, Te Māngai Pāho, was set up before the station came into being, whereas Irish language broadcasting used existing bodies, both funding and administrative. Irish language programming was commissioned via RTÉ and TG4 directly, rather than passing through an external funding body<sup>53</sup>.

Nevertheless, there are clear parallels in the sequence of events which led to the setting up of a separate national indigenous language television station in both countries. The first step was the public articulation of grievances by people who had been overlooked by the government, in tandem with a strong assertion of identity, linked to language, but also based on the idea of minority rights to media representation and control. Petitioning, demonstrating, obstructing ‘mainstream’ broadcasting, legal challenges and pirate broadcasting resulted in the establishment of community radio: the iwi radio network in New Zealand, and the regionally-based (but with national reach) Radió na Gaeltachta in Ireland. Radio, although important, did not satisfy the people’s need for a full broadcasting service, and the final phase leading up to the launch of a separate television station in the indigenous language was mainly characterised by political and legal negotiations. Great tenacity was required, as government obfuscated and resisted again and again. In both Ireland and New Zealand, the campaigns took three decades to bear fruit.

### **3 Current Aims and Structures of TG4 and Māori Television**

Both Māori Television and TG4 were established on the basis that they would provide alternative programming and a different ‘national’ ethos to that already broadcast on existing national television stations, by drawing from the well of indigenous language and culture. Both stations have relied on their distinctive language to make this alterity visible and audible. In the case of Māori Television, Māori tradition or tikanga also informs some business practices at the station. TG4’s motto, ‘*Súil eile*’ [another perspective], emphasises difference and perhaps a making whole of a hitherto one-eyed national mediascape<sup>54</sup>. The motto of Māori Television, ‘*Mā rātou, mā mātou, mā koutou, mā tātou*’ [for them, for us, for you, for all of us]<sup>55</sup>, begins with a recognition of those who have gone before, and acknowledges different audiences within their sphere of influence.

Aside from the aims laid out in broadcasting legislation, both stations strive toward further goals. Te Aratuku Whakaata Irirangi Māori/the Māori Television Service Act 2003 sets out the purpose of

Māori Television as the promotion of “te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori” (the Māori language and Māori culture). The Act states that this may be achieved through broadcasting:

in both Māori and English, [to] inform, educate, and entertain a broad viewing audience, and, in doing so, enrich New Zealand's society, culture, and heritage. (New Zealand, 2003: section 8)

There is an obvious dilemma here for the channel in trying to promote a living but lesser-spoken language and making programming for a wide audience. TG4 also faces a juggling act between catering for particular audiences whilst using a national but minority language. The legislation setting out the purpose of the television channels is discussed here, as well as the implications of such legislation for funding structures and modes of self-organisation.

### 3.1 Aims: Māori Television - *mā tātou* and TG4 - *Súil eile*

TG4 has a distinct presence in the Irish mediascape as a zone of innovation in relation to both language and content. Although from before its launch the goal of the television service was to bring the Irish language into a more mainstream position in Irish media, this is not in fact made explicit in the 2001 Broadcasting Act/ Acht Craolacháin (Ireland) or in its updated 2009 version. In contrast to the New Zealand legislation establishing Māori Television, the Irish Acts do not mention the Irish language as the main aim of TG4. In section (4) (a) however, it is stated that programmes should be ‘primarily in Irish’<sup>56</sup>. The role of TG4 as set out in the 2001 Act, and maintained in the 2009 update, is also to

‘facilitate or assist contemporary cultural expression and encourage and promote innovation and experimentation in broadcasting’ (Section 4 (b)), and thus to ‘cater for the expectations of audiences who are not generally catered for by other broadcasting services’ (Ireland, 2009: section 5).

It is significant that the purpose of TG4 is explicitly to cater for many minority groups, and not simply those who are Irish-speakers, although of course this latter group tend to take priority. To this end, the motto ‘Súil eile’ (another perspective) is the criterion for many of TG4’s commissioned projects, with the language aspect implicitly understood<sup>57</sup>. The Gaeltacht activist Seosamh Ó Cuaig muses on the meaning of ‘súil eile’:

D’fhéadfaí an-argóint a thosú faoi céard é an súil eile seo. Ach tá a fhios againn go rímhaith céard nach é. Ní homogenisation é agus ní consumerism é agus ní ionsaí ar an Iaráic é. Ní impiriúlachas é, ní imeacht le sruth é agus ní babe-achas é. [We could start a debate about what this ‘súil eile’ is, but we know very well what it is not. It’s not homogenisation, it’s not consumerism, and it’s not an attack on Iraq. It’s not imperialism, it’s not taking the path of least resistance, and it’s not shallow glamour] (Ó Cuaig, 2003: 48)<sup>58</sup>.

Ó Cuaig’s vision is clearly of a radical independent broadcaster, alternative to ‘mainstream’ anglophone media not only in language, but also in outlook. Minister Higgins also frames the *raison d’être* of the station largely in terms of cultural difference, stating that the establishment of *Teilifís na Gaeilge* was

to address a rights issue, the right to communicate, and also it was a component of public service broadcasting. It was of course obvious that it would help the spread of the use of Irish, but that was very much a secondary reason. (Higgins, interview 2001)

Here, the channel is presented as a counter to anglo-american hegemony as it broadcasts indigenous and international (non-English language) material to an engaged audience. Higgins's remark is interesting because it positions the idea of language revival as by-product, or as something which may flow on from culturally specific approaches to broadcasting, but not as something which needs to be made explicit or codified in itself.

Neither TG4 nor Māori Television is set up to be a museum or archive, but a contemporary medium for public entertainment and information which functions through a minority language<sup>59</sup>. The language, whilst integral to the ethos and outlook of the station, is a means to an end, rather than a fetishised object<sup>60</sup>. Lís Ní Dhálaigh (Stiúrthóir Ceannachán & Aschuir/ Acquisitions & Output Director, TG4) characterises the role of the station as providing “rogha féachana den chéad scoth – [is] cuma an bhfuil tú ar bheagán Gaeilge; nó líofa – beidh rogha ann duit,” [a first rate viewing choice- whether your Irish is fluent or not – there'll be something for you] (interview 2008). TG4 aspires to cover local and regional topics of interest, with a special emphasis on Gaeltacht issues; to provide non-Dublin-based television without alienating Dubliners; to screen European films not usually found outside Ireland's few, metropolitan art house cinemas; and (almost incidentally) to promote the Irish language, particularly among a younger audience. Management at TG4 certainly regard the language as central, although not in and of itself, but rather as a means of contributing to a desired ‘alterity’ of programming. Whilst the linguistic element has never been very clearly defined, progress towards this was made in 2010, when TG4's Ráiteas Seirbhíse Poiblí/Statement of Public Service (required by the 2009 Broadcasting Act) was published on the TG4 website. This Public Service Statement describes TG4 as a public service broadcaster “ar maithe le cur chun cinn agus le forbairt na Gaeilge agus le caomhnú an chultúir Ghaelaí /for the purposes of promotion and development of the Irish language and the preservation of Irish culture” (TG4, 2010: 3)<sup>61</sup>.

Māori Television was set up on the basis that the Crown's Treaty obligation to actively support te reo might be positively effected through national broadcasting<sup>62</sup>. The decades of activism that led to the establishment of the station also gave primacy to the notion of language revitalisation, as expressed by Larry Parr: “We regard our core business as being the language revitalisation business and television just happens to be the medium through which we do it” (Parr, interview 2007). However, unlike the stated aims for Te Māngai Pāho, which specify ‘te reo me ōna tikanga’ [the language and its associated culture], the Māori Television Act separates language and culture: ‘te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori’ [Māori language and Māori cultural values]. It is this separation which enables Māori Television to broadcast Māori cultural content in English, and attempt to reach the broader audience of non-reo-speakers. This wording was the result of much consultation

with Māori broadcast professionals (Walker, 2004). The separation between 'reo' and 'tikanga' in the Act is difficult to negotiate for some, as tikanga Māori is widely considered to grow from the reo<sup>63</sup>. Nonetheless, the aims of Māori Television, according to its website, are to "significantly contribute to te reo and tikanga Māori being increasingly valued and embraced; and to be an independent national Māori Television broadcaster that is successful with an assured future", and these are to be achieved through "principles and practices of tikanga and kaupapa Māori" (Māori Television website, 2010). Although originally 14 in number, the tikanga principles of Māori Television were whittled down to four (Schuster, 2009), in an attempt to translate different levels of detail between traditional oral, tribally specific cultures and the corporate culture of a metropolitan-based national television station: "Kia tika - Be professional and maintain high standards. Kia pono- Be truthful, honest and act with integrity Kia aroha - Be respectful and demonstrate empathy. Kia Māori - Maintain and uphold core Māori values" (Māori Television Annual Report 2008)<sup>64</sup>. This codification of cultural norms into a business context is different to the way TG4 operates, where such things are taken for granted, and go unsaid<sup>65</sup>. This may be because Irish culture is linked to the nation-state and thus less under threat than Māori cultural norms, which are regarded as somehow deviant from the Pākehā 'standard'.

Whilst the 'core business' of Māori Television is related to language, some fear that an emphasis on language per se at the expense of culture (in its most general sense) may alienate the larger portion of the Māori community who speak mostly English. Gary Wilson, former New Zealand Journalists Training Board Officer and Mana Māori Media Director<sup>66</sup>, interprets the phrase 'te reo Māori' not simply as the Māori language, but more metaphorically as 'the voice of Māori people', and makes the observation that

that voice, these days, comes in two languages, but predominantly in English. [I]t's that whole voice, not just the Maori language, which warrants protection and a secure place in the New Zealand media. (Wilson, 2006)<sup>67</sup>

Whilst this is persuasive, it may compromise the Treaty-based argument for having a separate television service, i.e. that the Māori language is a taonga and deserves full protection and respect, including a dedicated media service. Although Māori have long been sidelined and silenced on other national broadcasters in New Zealand, there is no reason why these channels could not have been compelled by legislation to represent Māori voices and perspectives in English in a more comprehensive manner. This would have been much easier than, for example, to oblige them to broadcast a certain proportion of programming in the indigenous language. It should be noted once more that, although the Māori Television Service enjoys a strong linguistic mandate, the campaign which led to its establishment drew the picture in broader strokes, as stated clearly in the 2000 MBAC Report (MBAC, 2000: 11). To participate in the existing mediascape and to develop broadcasting from a Māori perspective implies voice and culture in symbiosis, regardless of the language employed to express them. As Larry Parr points out, there is more at stake with Māori

Television than language alone: “A lot of people thought that it was going to be 100% Maori language. The legislation requires us to do more than being a 100% Māori language channel” (Parr, interview 2007). In fact, since 2008, Māori Television have operated a second channel called Te Reo, which broadcasts for three hours each evening in 100% te reo.

There is uncertainty as to the status of the Te Reo channel, as it is on air for such a limited time each day. Hita asks, “Ko wai te tuakana? Ko wai te teina?” [Which is the senior? Which is the junior?] (Hita, 2008: 5,6). Jim Mather, Tāhūhū Rangapū/ CEO Māori Television, admits that the current situation is not balanced, and comments that the plan is to increase the broadcast hours for the Te Reo channel<sup>68</sup>: “Over time Te Reo will stand alongside the existing Māori Television channel with equal standing and mana” (Mather, 2009). Although an inventive response to achieving a broad audience whilst maintaining Māori language content, the decision to ‘double-up’ on prime-time broadcasting whilst leaving less-popular segments of the day broadcast-free has positive and negative effects. It is true that audience reach is extended in the evening, as viewers may choose to watch either Te Reo or Māori Television; however the corralling of the language into a narrower secondary channel has an element of marginalisation, and may also result in some people missing the language content if they happen to watch at the ‘wrong’ time. As a means of maximizing viewers without overstressing limited resources, the decision not to broadcast on the main channel before 15h on weekdays (and 14h30 at weekends) was clearly based on audience research and the known daily routines of the general public<sup>69</sup>.

The existence of a separate television service allows for Māori control of commissioning, scheduling and the way in which the working environment is organised. It also ensures a safe haven for Māori tikanga on screen. Nonetheless, these things are possible precisely because of the recognition by the Crown (after extensive argument from Māori) that the language is a taonga. It would be more difficult to obtain such recognition on the somewhat hazy notion of culture, particularly as Māori popular culture appears hybridised, e.g. rap, hip hop influences in youth programming.

### **3.2 Funding**

Donald Browne comments that financial stability is essential for a minority language media outlet to enable language, self-esteem and cohesiveness (Browne, 1996: 241). However, the high costs associated with television production make this stability difficult to achieve for a minority group without the support of the state. This support is not always forthcoming, as seen above. Many have pointed to the inadequacy of public funding for Irish language broadcasting in general (Goan, 2006: 114), and for the television station in particular, as Higgins comments: “I was setting [Teilifís na Gaeilge] up in the teeth of an enormous opposition, and for that reason, I couldn’t get away with more money. I always regarded the money as inadequate” (Higgins, interview 2001)<sup>70</sup>. Similarly, as



government support for Māori Television has been far from whole-hearted, finance has always been an issue (Berryman, interview 2007).

In 2008, TG4 received €35m directly from the government (up from €23m in 2005 in line with inflation and to assist the channel in its independence from RTÉ). The Government provided funding of €32.25m to TG4 for 2010. Programming to the value of €8m comes to TG4 from RTÉ (in the form of 365 hours per year) (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007), and RTÉ is legally required to provide the channel with some technical support. As RTÉ funds these hours and support from a portion of the licence fee it is allocated, TG4 may be said to receive some licence fee revenue indirectly<sup>71</sup>. TG4 also derives income from selling commercial air-time and programme sponsorship of approximately €4m, which is used primarily to acquire English or foreign-language programmes. All the public money is devoted to Irish-language projects (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007). The Māori Television Service receives Crown provides funding as a Treaty obligation<sup>72</sup>. Direct funding for operational and administration costs comes via Vote Māori Affairs (\$11.5m p.a.), and Te Māngai Pāho provides \$16.12m p.a. in support for in-house production, the acquisition of indigenous programmes<sup>73</sup> and also sub-titling foreign programmes.

As recipients of public funding, both channels are expected to contribute, in their respective countries, to what in the TG4 Statement of Public Service is called “the wider national economy” (TG4, 2010: 8)<sup>74</sup>. In the Annual Reports of both stations, there is emphasis on the financial and economic success of the broadcaster<sup>75</sup>. These claims act as a defensive measure against possible cuts in government funding, which remains at the discretion of the Minister<sup>76</sup>. It is argued that such dependence on political goodwill has implications for editorial autonomy (Kenny, 2009). Although TG4 aims for creativity in broadcasting, producers are constrained by “market forces which insist on maximising the audience with the minimum of resources... [in a] quest to survive” (Watson: 2003: 122).

In such an environment, it is important to note the commitment of Māori Television and TG4 to their respective aims or kaupapa. Both television services receive public funding direct from the government, and both have stretched this funding to its utmost in order to broadcast more than the number of hours of indigenous language programming required by legislation (Walker, 2004: 373; Watson, 2003). Apart from the legal requirements of the Broadcasting Acts in their respective countries, both Māori Television and TG4 have set themselves self-imposed requirements for language content which exceed governmental expectations. At its inception in 1996, Teilifís na Gaeilge broadcast three hours a day, and by 2002 five (out of 16 overall) hours a day in Irish (Watson: 2003: 124; O’Connell, 2007: 258)<sup>77</sup>. The 2005 report from TG4 on proposals for legislation in relation to broadcasting remarked on the fact that its funding levels remained at the initial level (which had been planned for two hours of broadcasting per day) despite the fact that

the channel was then broadcasting 19 hours per day (of which six were in the Irish language) (TG4, 2005: 4). Since 2008, there have been 4.4 hours per day of first-run Irish language content (TG4, 2008: 10), and the aim is to increase this to six original hours per day by 2013 (TG4 2008: 23). In the case of Māori Television, the law requires at least 51% te reo content, and currently (until 30 June 2009) 70% of all programmes broadcast were in te reo (Māori Television, 2009: 24)<sup>78</sup>.

### 3.3 Structure and Governance

The structure and governance of a television service reveals where the real power resides. It is obvious that the governments of both Ireland and New Zealand have a stake in their respective indigenous language channels because they provide public funding, but the different priorities, worldview and values of the indigenous language group sometimes require a different approach to production than that taken by other national broadcasters. A look at structural and governance configurations will show to what extent autonomy exists in practice. TG4 is set up on similar lines to RTÉ, albeit on a smaller scale<sup>79</sup>. Māori Television, however, has a more unconventional structure, and stands unique in the New Zealand semi-state sector.

An independent Māori Television service must in theory be organised and run differently to 'mainstream' New Zealand broadcasting models, because it draws on a different cultural tradition. Royal (2003) defines an indigenous culture as one whose world view privileges the connection between people and the natural world<sup>80</sup>. Such a view is reflected in the structure of the organisation, the type of programme broadcast and also in the working practices used in production. Stuart writes that:

[E]xpecting indigenous people to use the mass media systems in the same way as the European-derived cultures is to make assumptions of assimilation at best, or colonising at worst. As indigenous people adopt the mass media into their own culture, they should be allowed to do so on their own terms, according to their own needs and desires and in ways compatible with their own cultures. And to be free to explain that use, to theorise mass media, according to their own culturally based understandings of social functions. (Stuart, 2007: 20)

Downing and Husband (2005) have remarked that political structures of the state inform the way in which the indigenous media environment evolves. For them, "the state apparatus defines the field of struggle, and of opportunity, for indigenous communities" (2005: 128), but actually in New Zealand, the definition of this 'field of struggle' owes much to the alternative vision of Māori initiatives. They have re-ordered the way in which public frequencies are allocated, demonstrated innovative ways to network between geographically distant communities with iwi radio, and created a unique partnership governance model to operate the Māori Television Service<sup>81</sup>. Te Kāhui o Māhutonga (TKoM, a group formed to review the 2003 establishment Act) argue that there is room for further development, and that "the legislation must be amended to achieve its own expectations... to perpetuate a Māori world view. There is no point for any Māori endeavour to follow the letter of the law, if that law compromises the capacity of the people to be Māori" (TKoM,

2009: 37). Such a legislative recognition of tikanga is construed as being of benefit to the New Zealand polity as well as to the Māori people<sup>82</sup>.

As Māori Television was set up under Treaty principles, its governance structure is influenced by ideas of partnership and power-sharing. It is one of several institutions where Māori and the Crown share decision-making control in a more or less equal relationship. In the context of political or cultural autonomy and the oft-mentioned but highly contentious tino rangatiratanga [self-determination], this structure is an interesting template for other initiatives between the state and indigenous groups. The Māori Television Service is a statutory corporation with its own legislation, and its governance structure is more complex than that of TG4. The Māori Television Board of Directors has seven directors. As the broadcaster is the embodiment of a partnership between the Crown and Māori, the two parties have independent and joint powers. Iwi interests are represented by Te Pūtahi Pāho [the Māori Electoral College], which appoints four members of the Television Service's seven-member board<sup>83</sup>. The remaining three board members are appointed by the Crown through the Minister of Māori Affairs (Hon Dr. Pita Sharples) and the Minister of Finance (Hon Bill English). The advisory structure of Māori Television follows traditional form. In 2005, ten kaumātua were appointed to form a Kaihautū Tikanga [Cultural Values Council], now (2010) known as the Kaunihera Kaumātua, responsible directly to the CEO, which works to keep people culturally 'safe'<sup>84</sup>. The task of the council (and the programme-makers) is to manage the process of bringing aspects of the culture into a new environment (national television).

Even as the importance of tikanga is emphasised, it is recognised that "there are clashes with the stresses and demands of broadcast television production" (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 4). Speaking of Ngāi Tahu progress, Te Maire Tau says, "The challenge for us is to synthesise the traditional tribal values with corporate capitalist values. That tension is always going to exist and we'll have to manage it" (Tau, 2004, quoted in Ansley, 2004). Indeed, Edwards & Stephens' report on the Māori Television draft Rautaki Reo explicitly refers to the difficulty of maintaining a Māori "culture and atmosphere" when dealing with Pākehā paradigms and institutional structures developed to produce television (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 4). The goal for 2014, according to the report on the draft Rautaki Reo (2009), is to encourage in Māori Television a corporate culture that is "a fusion of professional requirements and cultural authenticity" (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 6).

The complicated structure woven to bring Māori programmes from idea to screen, involving a Trust, several Ministries, two funding bodies and innumerable independent production companies, seemed from the start to representatives of the Treasury as a possible obstacle to the delivery of the Crown obligation (to promote the Māori language). Nevertheless, it was vital that control be seen to be evenly spread, and the structure was implemented after consultation with various professional bodies. Although debate continues as to the efficiency and relevance of this complex

model (Mather, 2009; Paul-Robie, interview 2009), it remains in use. One concern about Te Pūtahi Pāho is that although its members are skilled in “such areas as governance arrangements, business planning and operations, and the Māori language” (Ministry of Economic Development, 1998) there is a lack of representation of people with specific experience in the television industry. To some, this diminishes the mandate of the body.

The structure and governance of TG4 follows a broadcasting model similar to that of the semi-state body RTÉ, where an Authority and Board are appointed and have relative freedom to dispose of government funding within the parameters of their governing legislation. Since TG4 became independent of RTÉ in 2007 and the station was run, until the 2009 Broadcasting Act, by a board of directors composed of between seven and nine people, appointed by the government. Since the implementation of the 2009 Act, the Board comprises 12 members, of whom six are

appointed by the Government on the nomination of the Minister, four...by the Government having regard to the advice of the Joint Oireachtas Committee, one is a worker director and the remaining member is the TG4 CEO / Director General. (TG4, 2010: 8)

The Board reports to the Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources. It is a requirement of the Act that members of the board have experience in related fields (section 44 (8) (a) Broadcasting Act 2001; (Part 7, Chapter 1, section 82 (1) Broadcasting Act 2009)) and be “able to communicate proficiently in the Irish language” Part 7, Chapter 1, section 82 (2) Broadcasting Act 2009)<sup>85</sup>. Although it is not mentioned in the Act, in practice many Board members have strong links to Gaeltacht communities, and the current members are drawn from backgrounds in business, education, community work, sport and the arts. Since mid-2007, TG4 has been independent of RTÉ, which means that the TG4 Board now has responsibility for the direction of the station, and complete control over expenditure and choice of programmes (Mhic Garbheith, e-mail 2010).

Although operating separately, each with their own Board and Authority, a relationship between RTÉ and TG4 remains<sup>86</sup>. The terms of the 2001 and 2009 Broadcasting Acts oblige RTÉ to supply TG4 with 365 hours of programmes annually, at no cost<sup>87</sup>. Watson remarks that the value of this hour is significantly less than RTÉ’s average expenditure on independent productions, being just over half the amount (2003: 119). In 2009, these hours cost RTÉ almost €11m. Representatives from each channel come to agreement each year as to the content of these hours, some of which are commissioned from the independent sector by RTÉ for TG4 (Ní Ógáin, interview 2008)<sup>88</sup>. In New Zealand, there is also a co-operative relationship between TVNZ and Māori Television. TVNZ is required by the Television New Zealand Amendment Bill (in progress 2010) to make its archives available to Māori Television and is also required by funding agencies to allow Māori Television second-play rights on programmes fully funded by those agencies. For example, *Waka Huia* and *Marae* are screened on Māori Television under the ‘Programme Supply’ strand of the agreement. Other archival footage, and episodes of *Koha* from the archives come under the Footage Agreement.

TVNZ claims only the costs of retrieval, such as dubbing and transporting of material to Māori Television (New Zealand, 2009)<sup>89</sup>. Originally, Māori Television sought a closer link to TVNZ (Schuster, interview 2010); however no direct formal agreement exists between Māori Television and TVNZ ([www.tvnz.co.nz](http://www.tvnz.co.nz)). The potential for the two public broadcasters to work in a collaborative, rather than a competitive, manner is there, and Paora Maxwell, the Head of the Māori Department at TVNZ, describes it in terms of family ties: “the reality is... we’re all whānau” (Maxwell, 2009). Indeed, most of the older people now working in Māori Television started out in TVNZ, so they know each other and have worked together over the years.

Since the inception of both stations, initial reactions of disbelief and resentment on the part of many in the majoritarian media at the prospect of a government-funded television service for an indigenous minority have given way to a grudging respect at the new stations’ growing independence and imaginative public service broadcasting. Both Māori Television and TG4 have positioned themselves as national channels above the “digital jungle” (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008), acknowledging the primacy of existing channels, but asserting their relevance to the country at large. Unlike TG4, however, which is figured as a broadcaster catering for a national - if unevenly spread - interest in the Irish language, Māori Television draws its *raison d’être* from the support of different iwi, who joined their voices to make a strong communal case to the New Zealand government for a ‘Māori’ television service, but who continue to cherish and maintain the particularities of their iwi *mita* and *kawa*. Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, in a review of the 2003 legislation, insist that there be “provision for a tribal point of view... The Treaty relationship is not with a group of national organisation representatives. Rather it is with iwi” (Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 5, Issues 8). Huirangi Waikerepuru (Tangahoe, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngā Rauru, Ngā Ruahine, Taranaki, Ngāpuhi) reflects that full autonomy from the government has yet to be achieved, but this would be desirable in the long-term (Waikerepuru, 2006, quoted in Mane, 2009: 230).

### **3.4 Location**

Although neither Māori Television nor TG4 are fully independent in that they both receive public funding to pursue their national public service objectives, both stations maintain a strong sense of cultural identity and links to their *croíphobail* [core communities]. Here, the location and design of the headquarters are important on symbolic and practical levels. Given the history of displacement and dispossession, a permanent structure representing media output is regarded as a strong symbol that the state is genuine in its support for the service. The design of the building reflects the ethos and values of the language community, and its technological resources denote a contemporary engagement with the wider world. Deciding where to locate an indigenous national language broadcaster depends on issues of proximity, ownership and logistics. Guyot (2007: 42), following de Certeau (1984: 17-8), considers a certain ‘territoire’ as essential in making real the linking between language and place. In the Māori context, this idea is *tūranga waewae* [a place to

stand, home ground]. Zuberogoitia claims that for normalisation to occur, a media communications model must be “centred within the linguistic community” (2003, cited in Arana et al., 2007: 166). As a minority linguistic community is often not literally all in the one place, however, to centre a media outlet could well mean simply to make it central to the daily experience of the speakers - not physically or geographically, but emotionally and culturally.<sup>90</sup>

Whilst Zuberogoitia’s idea can be interpreted as a virtual centering, Cormack takes the pragmatic line that the media outlet should be physically based where the language is spoken. He argues that successful minority language media use “one recognised form of the language... linking strongly to a specific territory in which the language is strongest and in which there is a strong historical presence” (2000:14). There are two elements to consider here- a recognised form<sup>91</sup> and a place where this form of the language is strong. The TG4 studios are in rural Baile na hAbhann in the Conamara Gaeltacht, where Irish is used as a community language, and within the electoral constituency of the Minister who established the broadcaster. The building is quite isolated, being surrounded by fields around 30km from Galway city. The Māori Television studios, in contrast, are in central Auckland, a city of 1.5 million inhabitants and public transport links, but without a geographical concentration of te reo speakers. Although showing very different results, the decisions as to where to place both TG4 and Māori Television were taken with regard to the linguistic and infrastructural hinterland.

A television station located near the home of its audience faces fewer logistical problems in getting vox pops and studio audiences. The concept here is that of cultural proximity, of not being centralised, but going out to the people and making programmes in their area. One might expect that a sense of ownership and ‘authenticity’ would also flow from the organic situation of the headquarters in such a place. However, in the early years of TG4, this was not the case (Fennell, interview 2001). There is the difficulty of certain areas or groups being over-represented on screen, often due to the location of production companies (Gruffyd Jones, 2007: 202; Lysaght, 2004a)<sup>92</sup>. Critics have also commented that the location of the television headquarters in the western Gaeltacht runs the risk of further peripheralising the northern and southern Gaeltacht areas, and of creating a new ‘centre’ along the same model as the predominantly English-language Dublin media in the east of the country<sup>93</sup>. Commentators have referred to Baile na hAbhann as ‘Galway 4’ in a tongue-in-cheek reference to the middle-class leafy suburbs and their associated mentality around the Donnybrook Dublin 4 location of the RTÉ studios. Whilst maverick film-maker Bob Quinn lauds TG4’s focus on stories important to Connacht, Pól Ó Muirí, a reviewer from the north but based in the east, asks if the G in TG4 stands for Galway. There is a tightrope to be walked between local specificity and insularity. TG4 must be careful not to fall into the trap of creating a new Pale on the other side of the country<sup>94</sup>.

Newmarket, a busy fashionable shopping district in Auckland city, seems an incongruous place to situate the 'metaphorical marae' of the Māori Television studios, yet there were several reasons why this place was chosen. Auckland has a concentration of television professionals, and the Newmarket area is a public transport hub. Another factor was the 'neutrality' of the urban, because if the studios had been associated with the rōhe [area] of a particular iwi, there was the risk that other iwi would reject the service (Kāretu, 1992; Paul-Robie interview 2009). Whilst located in a zone of advertising and consumerism, the interior of the Māori Television building feels like another world. The existing building was refashioned by (mainly Māori) commissioned artists to reflect the special purpose and cultural origin of the television service. Features echoing the layout of a marae include a three-metre kūwaha [arch/door] at the entrance, and carved pou [columns] just inside. A neon simulation of traditional kōwhaiwhai [painted scroll ornamentation] decoration festoons the top of the doorway and ends under the porch with symbolic reference to the prow of a waka. Along the length of this swirls white neon light-tubing, which represents the hau, or mauri [life force] of the staff. The corridor walls are angled to make a narrow passage, "signifying the challenging journey to establish Māori Television" (Paul, 2009). This area evokes Te Kore, the pregnant darkness from before the world began, and the source of creativity<sup>95</sup>. Hanging from the ceiling are three large steel kete, representing the three baskets of knowledge of Māori legend. The ethos of the station is conveyed in a whakataukī [proverb], the lines of which one may follow on various walls throughout the building "...he aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata" [what is the most important thing in the world? People.] This whakataukī is significant as one of the guiding principles of daily operations in Māori Television, where personal wellbeing of staff and manuhiri [visitors] is actively supported. In the reception area are framed facsimilies of the Treaty of Waitangi, pointing to another element of the station's whakapapa. As a central element to Māori manaakitanga [hospitality] is kai [food], the eating area is in the middle of the ground floor lay-out. Most of the work areas are open plan, contributing to a sense of community and collectivity. The glass doors of the main studio insist on the openness of the station to the public, who are also encouraged to enter the Newmarket headquarters for tours<sup>96</sup>. The design of the building is a clear indication of the relationship Māori Television wants to develop with its viewers.

## **Conclusion**

TG4 and Māori Television each have a mandate to support their respective languages, and to serve audiences with varying degrees of fluency or interest. Both stations envisage their purpose as being broader than language revival alone, emphasising their responsibility to the indigenous culture, and the development of an indigenous production sector.

The involvement of the state has been necessary in the case of both TG4 and Māori Television for ideological and practical reasons. After the campaigns seeking recognition of Irish and te reo as everyday and community languages as opposed to ceremonial resources for political posturing, the

governments of both Ireland and New Zealand finally provided the funding and legislative support to launch a television broadcasting service. In Ireland, this support came out of the shift in perception of the language, and was assisted by an unusual period of national economic prosperity known as the Celtic Tiger. The New Zealand Crown was made to take note of its Treaty obligations, in a period where Māoritanga was becoming more prominent in promotional material, and a growing number of Māori film-makers were producing work which achieved international acclaim. After decades of “ignorance, disinterest and occasional hostility” (Ritchie, 1992: 193) from the majority in respect of Māoritanga, there is now an innovative and resourceful television broadcaster, creating images to broaden the perspectives of insiders and outsiders alike. The governance and structure of each station reflects its position in the greater polity: TG4 operates on a similar plane to RTÉ, as a national public service broadcaster, and Māori Television precipitated an innovative power-sharing template between Crown and broadcaster which, although short of complete autonomy, is the envy of many other indigenous minority language groups.

Mutu believes that much of the resistance to Māori Television stems from the recognition of its potential to provide an independent voice, commenting that most members of the government cannot follow the language (Mutu, 2007). Whether this be so or not, it is clear that throughout the period leading up to the establishment of the Māori Television Service, state support was not easily won. The Report of the Maori Broadcasting Advisory Committee in 2000 makes the point that a chronology of events between 1973 and 2000 “reflects the difficult struggle that various Māori groups have endured with the Crown” (MBAC 2000: 7). However, the station has since become popular with a significant proportion of the New Zealand population, and many of its viewers are not Māori. Staff at Māori Television and TG4 recognise that if the minority language station is seen to be successful, political support is likely to continue (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007; Parr, interview 2007)<sup>97</sup>. The symbolic and cultural power held by a television broadcaster may have an impact on national political and economic arenas. In deciding which language to use when, and being able to define the purpose of broadcasting in cultural terms, the broadcaster produces meanings and modes of organisation which express the self and influence others (Lull, 2000: 71). As national broadcasters, both stations address the nation, and provide fresh perspectives on ‘national’ issues in taking the minoritised language and culture as their point of departure.

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<sup>1</sup> Even during this period, dismissive comments were made by government about the broadcast potential of Irish speakers, such as “the restricted life of the Gaeltacht will greatly limit the amount of... material... and the standard of performance will inevitably be low” (Report 1945: 136, quoted in Watson, 2003: 135).

<sup>2</sup> Even in the twenty first century, most journalists are not Māori and do not have the “interpretative resources” for dealing with Māori stories (Abel, 2004; Stuart, 2005; Wheoki-Mane, interview 2010).



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<sup>3</sup> As Angela Bourke suggests, a “self-determined identity [can be] expressed by and developed through the communications media” (2006: 93), which makes an autonomous television channel a clear opportunity for the realisation of both.

<sup>4</sup> This was changed in line with modern spelling to Raidió Teilifís Éireann in 2009.

<sup>5</sup> See also Ó hÍfearnáin (2000: 92-116) for an overview of the relation between State policy and developments in Irish language broadcasting.

<sup>6</sup> In 1981 BBC Radio Ulster began to broadcast a 30-minute programme *Blas* five days a week, and in the early 1990s, BBC NI screened its first Irish language programme, *SRL*. For a comprehensive account of the situation of the Irish language and the broadcast media in Northern Ireland up until the early 1990s, see Aodán Mac Póilín and Liam Andrews (1994) and Helen Ó Murchú (2008: 338-344).

The Good Friday Agreement provided that the British Government would work with the relevant British and Irish broadcasting authorities to make TG4 more ‘widely available’ in Northern Ireland. (TG4 is the only broadcaster mentioned in the Agreement.)

“The [Irish] Government will continue to work with the relevant British authorities to ensure that this will be achieved in the context of the switchover to digital television by 2012” (Pobail, 2008: 39-40). See also <http://www.nio.gov.uk/agreement.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> There is also a community radio station in West Belfast called Raidió Fáilte [Radio Welcome], which began in October 2006. It broadcasts 24 hours a day and is also available online.

<sup>8</sup> The Board of the ILBF is made up of representatives from TG4, BBC NI, Foras na Gaeilge and audience members.

<sup>9</sup> Patrick Day points out that in the early days of NZ broadcasting, although it was “a major influence in the establishment of a New Zealand nationality, it defined that nationality by declining to focus on the differences amongst New Zealanders” (2000: 315).

<sup>10</sup> In 1999 the public broadcasting fee (PBF) was replaced by direct grant from government from general tax revenue (Lealand, 2008: 151).

<sup>11</sup> In the same year (2003) the Television Local Content Group was established to set targets for local content-members: NZoA, SPADA and national free to air broadcasters.

<sup>12</sup> Horrocks also remarks that the Māori legal action challenging the government over the right to dispose of broadcasting assets also led indirectly to the preservation of TVNZ as a ‘national’ broadcaster (Horrocks, 2004b: 64).

<sup>13</sup> If repeats and bilingual programmes are taken into account, then the schedules of TVNZ and RTÉ provide 6-7% and 1.3% respectively in their national indigenous language. This is based on a study of television schedules published in *The Listener* (New Zealand) and *The RTÉ Guide* (Ireland) for a fortnightly period in 2009.

<sup>14</sup> They published a book called ‘Sit Down and Be Counted’, outlining their ideas for regional broadcasts from the Gaeltacht areas on RTÉ (1969).

<sup>15</sup> For a history of RTÉ, see Corcoran (2008: 167-173).

<sup>16</sup> This was also the case on radio: “You could get away with murder in Irish on the radio” (Ó Braonáin, 1949: 11-2, quoted in Bartlett, 1988: 227).

<sup>17</sup> See Ó Murchú (1986) for a more positive view of RTÉ’s Irish language and bilingual output in the early years.

<sup>18</sup> Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin (interview 2010) reflects: “D’airigh mé nach raibh mórán bá acu le coincheap mionteanga.. [Bhí siad] ag iarraidh cláracha Béarla a dhéanamh i nGaeilge” [I felt they didn’t have much sympathy for the idea of a minority language... [They were] trying to make programmes with an English-language ethos in Irish].

<sup>19</sup> In 1984, Mac Dhonnagáin began *Dilín ó Deamhas* (for children), and in 1987 *Cúrsaí* (current affairs).

<sup>20</sup> *Nuacht* and *Nuacht TG4* are produced by RTÉ, but in 2009, moved to the Baile na hAbhann studios of TG4 - the first time any element of RTÉ’s core service had left the capital city. It is significant that the only regular daily television broadcast in the Irish language produced by RTÉ is now based in the headquarters of TG4, as this means that there is little Irish language presence in the RTÉ Dublin studios. However, some TG4 programmes are recorded in the RTÉ studios, e.g. the talent shows *The Jig Gig* and *Glas Vegas* (Ní Nuadháin, e-mail 2010).

<sup>21</sup> During *Seachtain na Gaeilge* each year a special series featuring the Irish language (with some parts in English) is also commissioned. Two recent series involved adults from Ireland and abroad trying to learn the language, e.g. *In the Name of the Fada* (2008) and *An bhFuil Cead Agam?* (2009).

<sup>22</sup> It is interesting to note that in Ireland, the Irish language was a feature of national radio from the beginning (1926), whereas in New Zealand, the first meaningful (less scripted and more sustained) use of te reo on radio was in the early 1940s. For reasons of space, I have had to omit discussion on the crucial role iwi radio played in developing a Māori mediascape in the 1980s. For an account of this area, see Beatson (1996).

<sup>23</sup> TV3, as a private enterprise, has no obligation in relation to Māori – or indeed local - content, but screens *Pūkana*, a bilingual children’s programme, on Sunday mornings.

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- <sup>24</sup> Before 1986, Māori programmes were made under the designation 'Special Projects' (Ngata, 2009).
- <sup>25</sup> The programme officially began in February 1983, after the success of Derek Fox's two and half minute news programme during Māori Language Week in 1982.
- <sup>26</sup> Even by 2000, less than 3% of all programmes on TVNZ and RNZ were about Māori or in te reo, and all of these were broadcast outside prime time (MBAC, 2000: 7)
- <sup>27</sup> *Koha* actually ended in the late 1980s, but was revived by NZoA funding in 1989 (Ngata, 2009)
- <sup>28</sup> Public opinion seems to have shifted in the intervening decades. The New Zealand on Air 2009 annual report mentions that 55% of those surveyed think that a Māori perspective on mainstream television programmes is important (NZoA, 2009: 17).
- <sup>29</sup> The series was written and presented by the historian Michael King, and produced by John O'Shea.
- <sup>30</sup> Larry Parr (Head of Programming at Māori Television 2005-2008, and currently Head of Television at Te Māngai Pāho) was the power behind the television series *E Tipu e Rea* (Thunderbox Television). The project was groundbreaking, as almost all the cast and crew involved were Māori. Several of these people continued successfully in the industry, including director Lee Tamahori and writer Riwia Brown. Trisha Dunleavy provides a useful overview of New Zealand television drama in the 1970s and 80s, including programmes involving Māori content or characters (Dunleavy, 2005: 45, 59, 90, 144-148).
- <sup>31</sup> These programmes were originally funded by New Zealand on Air from around 1994-8, and now by Te Māngai Pāho (NZoA, 2009: 4).
- <sup>32</sup> This programme was amongst those funded by New Zealand on Air in 2009. Funding for 'Māori television programming' from NZoA in 2009 was to the value of \$9,476,255, of which independent production houses providing material for TV One and TV2 got \$3,906,380 between them, and Māori Television got \$4,840,420. TV3 also received funding for *Pūkana* subtitles (NZoA, 2009: 59 Appx 6).
- <sup>33</sup> For a comparative overview of such campaigns, see Hourigan (2003).
- <sup>34</sup> Gael Linn is an entrepreneurial organisation whose aim is to "foster and promote the Irish language and its heritage throughout Ireland" (Gael Linn, n.d.).
- <sup>35</sup> For a detailed account of the history of Irish-language broadcasting, focusing particularly on the steps leading to the establishment of Teilifís na Gaeilge, see Iarfhlaith Watson (2003: 62-87).
- <sup>36</sup> In another context, Ní Dhuibhne also comments on the 'cosiness' of Dublin Gaeilgeoirí of her childhood who had a different mentality to Gaeltacht people (Ní Dhuibhne, 2004: 75).
- <sup>37</sup> Freagra [Response] was a sub-group of Conradh na Gaeilge, set up in the late 1970s by some of the younger members to agitate for better broadcast services in the Irish language.
- <sup>38</sup> This "group of articulate young radicals" focused on broadcasting amongst a range of issues, demanding policy change to protect the life of the Gaeltacht (Ó Tuathaigh, 1979: 113, quoted in Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000: 106).
- <sup>39</sup> Ó Glaisne notes that since 1976, Radió na Gaeltachta has had international stories from contacts in business, embassies and churches abroad (Ó Glaisne, 1982: 229).
- <sup>40</sup> Journalist Uinsíonn Mac Dubhghaill singles out Donncha Ó hÉallaithe from Cois Fharráige and Ciarán Ó Feinneadha from Dublin as two key players in making the wishes of the campaign a reality (Mac Dubhghaill, 2008: 123). This is in line with observations by Donald Browne on the driving force behind minority language radio, which is neither the public at large nor politicians, but tends to be dedicated media individuals, who cause an 'élite snowball', and bring others along with them (Browne, 1996: 160). Similarly in New Zealand, key figures like Whai Ngata and Derek Fox, amongst others, promoted the drive to a more Māori inflected sense of television.
- <sup>41</sup> Montrose is the location of RTÉ studios, a comfortable leafy Dublin suburb, unrepresentative of most of the (rural) country.
- <sup>42</sup> Dónall Ó Lubhlaigh (1994) claims this is because the Irish-speaking network was better organised and motivated to phone in.
- <sup>43</sup> However, Harris argues that social networks maintained links between kāinga [home place] and city (2009).
- <sup>44</sup> An important cultural turning point was the mid-1980s Te Māori exhibition of Māori art in America (Ritchie, 1992: 101). As well as showing toi Māori [art] in a respectful manner, it brought world attention to the richness of the culture, and inspired Whai Ngata (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui) and Ernie Leonard to set up the Māori Programmes department at TVNZ.
- <sup>45</sup> For example, the iwi radio station Radio Kahungunu organized a radio-thon which raised \$19,000 as a donation for the appellants (Te Rito, interview 2006).
- <sup>46</sup> An interesting discussion of the scope and role of Te Māngai Pāho may be found in Cleave (2008).
- <sup>47</sup> TVOne broadcast a one-hour highlights package, and TV3 showed two hours.
- <sup>48</sup> A report by Pihama et al. (1996) provides a discussion of the findings of the monitoring and evaluation of the Māori Television Pilot Project, operated by Aotearoa Television Network.
- <sup>49</sup> Ironically, after cutting the ribbon, he could not open the door, as it had (inadvertently?) been locked from the inside (DVD 2).

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<sup>50</sup> For an introductory overview of the development of Māori broadcasting policy, see Te Aroha Mane-Wheoki (2005: 61-80).

<sup>51</sup> The MBAC also wanted a charter requiring TVNZ to broadcast 15% Māori content instead of the then 3% - and for this percentage to progressively increase each year (Mane-Wheoki, 2005: 68)

<sup>52</sup> Launch sequences of both channels are available to view online: TG4 (then TnaG):

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB6drZNIHfo&feature=PlayList&p=5A07A0A0705C5538&playnext\\_from=PL&playnext=1&index=15](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB6drZNIHfo&feature=PlayList&p=5A07A0A0705C5538&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=15) and Māori Television: [www.nzonscreen.com/title/maori-television-launch-2004](http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/maori-television-launch-2004). It is interesting to see the emphasis on place (for Māori Television, mostly the beauties of the natural world, and for TnaG, this is accompanied by images of iconic cities) and traditional music in both sequences.

<sup>53</sup> Later the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI) was set up to augment broadcasters' funding of independent productions, and in 2001, it had permission to disburse 5% of licence fee. The BCI changed its name to the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) in 2009. The rules of the Sound and Vision scheme of the BAI require 25% of the funding to go to Irish language broadcasting, and in the late 2009 round, more than 50% was awarded to Irish and bilingual shows, most of which were supported by TG4 (Noonan, 2009).

<sup>54</sup> The mediascape is understood to influence the conception of the nation, as Morash writes, "a consideration of media is central to any understanding of Ireland, its place and culture" (Morash, 2010).

<sup>55</sup> This slogan, used in its full form until 2007, was rendered in Māori Television publicity material as '*Mā mātou, mā rātou, mā koutou, mā tātou/ All ages, two peoples, two languages*'.

<sup>56</sup> The channel should "provide a comprehensive range of programmes, primarily in the Irish language, that reflect the cultural diversity of the whole island of Ireland and include programmes that entertain, inform and educate, provide coverage of sporting, religious and cultural activities and cater for the expectations of those of all age groups in the community whose preferred spoken language is Irish or who otherwise have an interest in Irish" (Ireland, 2001: part VI, 4a) and the same in the 2009 Act.

<sup>57</sup> As Ó Gallchóir (interview 2007) puts it, "gur cheart an iarracht a dhéanamh sceideal chomh cuimsithe agus is féidir a chur ar fáil, agus é sin ar fad a chur ar fáil mheán na Gaeilge" [that as comprehensive a schedule as possible should be provided, and this in the Irish language]. The rationale is that "má tá TG4 i lár an mhargaidh, ba cheart go mbeadh an Ghaeilge agus an cultúr agus an spórt agus an ceol agus na gnéithe éagsúla sin den chultúr i lár an mhargaidh fosta" [If TG4 is centre-stage, then the language and the culture the sport and the music and other aspects of the culture should be in the limelight too] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008).

<sup>58</sup> See also Chapter 5 for a discussion of alternative approaches to programme-making.

<sup>59</sup> Cathal Goan, former Head of Irish language programmes at RTÉ and first Director General of Teilifís na Gaeilge, underlines this view in his reflections on the establishment of the channel: "we shared a conviction that we were to be a professional television service that broadcast in the Irish language, rather than a language initiative that would broadcast on television" (2007: 109).

<sup>60</sup> It should be noted that although Māori Television gives the language greater prominence than does TG4 as the explicit *raison d'être* of the station, there has also been concern that the emphasis on language might lead to other aspects being overlooked. This has been remarked by the group reviewing the Māori Television Service Act: "The fixation on language to date has preserved the notion of linguistic sanctity at the cost of cultural integrity" (Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 1, Issues 1).

<sup>61</sup> Séamus Mac Donnacha regards the purpose of TG4 as three-fold – to provide a critical focus on Irish-language organisations, to be a public sphere for communities, creating a space for debate, for performance of our own voices (and it is of vital importance that such expressions and interactions be measured by standards of the community itself) and thirdly, to support intergenerational transmission of the language in the home by providing children's programmes (2008: 110-1).

<sup>62</sup> Te Kāhui o Māhutonga comment that the stated purpose (section 3) of the Act and its principal functions (section 8) are inconsistent, in that language 'promotion' is supported, but not "preservation and protection" ref p 1 executive summary. "To preserve the language means to guard against linguistic deterioration. It also gives cause for the establishment of archive facilities. To protect the language means to safeguard its intellectual, emotional and spiritual qualities" (TKoM, 2009: 12).

<sup>63</sup> The Māori Television website itself supports this reading: "The Māori language is the cornerstone of Māori culture... It is a taonga (treasure), at the very heart of Māori culture and identity" (Māori Television website, 2010).

<sup>64</sup> These values are prominently displayed on a wall-mounted plaque in the reception area of Māori Television.

<sup>65</sup> The values espoused by TG4 are set out as: *ceangal*, *fiúntas*, *cruitheacht* and *réamhghníomhachas* (TG4, 2010: 8), translated as connection, quality, creativity and proactivity (TG4, 2010: 7), none of which are particularly linked to Irish language culture more than English.

<sup>66</sup> Mana Māori Media was set up in 1990 on foot of the 1989 Broadcasting Act. Its aim was to create a national Māori news service, and it provided a daily news magazine for Radio New Zealand (Browne, 1996: 146).

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<sup>67</sup> Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, the group who reviewed the Māori Television Service Act, would agree: “The sole interpretation of te reo as ‘language’ is incomplete and misleading. *We recommend that the interpretation of te reo Māori in Section 6 is amended to read ‘The language and voice of the Māori people’* [emphasis in original]. (Recommendation 2)” (Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 5).

<sup>68</sup> “In the next five years it could possibly increase to the point where it may be a seven- or eight-hour-per-day channel” (Mather, interview 2007).

<sup>69</sup> However, if viewers are channel-hopping at one of these off-peak times, and see nothing but a test-card or other non-programme material (radio in background), they may come to regard the station as a work-in-progress, and thus not be inclined to choose it at another time. Its image, so vibrant at broadcasting times, is necessarily dulled when there is no programming to watch. Nonetheless, it is a calculated risk.

<sup>70</sup> Higgins decided personally to allocate spare capacity on the frequency to Teilifís na Gaeilge “so that they could use it to try and make additional funding” (Higgins, 2001). At this time, there was also consideration of the idea that the channel split into two, as later proved to be the case with Māori Television and Te Reo channel.

<sup>71</sup> RTÉ's accounts express these expenses as a percentage of its licence fee income, and in 2008 the amount was 7.92% (RTÉ, 2008: 29).

<sup>72</sup> A public submission to the group charged with reviewing the 2003 Act holds that “the funding of MTS should not be seen by the Crown and its agencies as ‘government funding’, but as a Treaty grievance recompense, with the Crown’s investment in that recompense being protected by the Crown appointments on the MTS Board” (public submission to Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 18).

<sup>73</sup> This refers to programmes about indigenous issues, which may come from New Zealand or abroad.

<sup>74</sup> This is contextualized in the 2008 TG4 Annual Report as part of a range of public service objectives: “raon leathan de thosaíochtaí beartais phoiblí atá tábhachtach lena n-áirítear an Ghaeilge, an eacnamaíocht náisiúnta, fostaíocht agus dlárú réigiúnach, an tionscal cruthaitheachta, craoltóireacht seirbhíse poiblí, teicneolaíocht agus éagsúlacht cultúir” / delivers across a wide range of important public policy priorities including the Irish language, the national economy, regional employment and decentralisation, the creative industry, public service broadcasting, technology and cultural diversity (TG4, 2008: 18).

Muriwai writes of the cultural, linguistic and economic impact of Māori Television as part of its overarching goal: “Hei hou e whakaatu ana i te pānga (pai) o Whakaata Māori ki te ōhanga me te ahurea o Aotearoa, anō hoki ko tā mātau koha ki te whakapakaritanga o te reo Māori [continue to stand for (good) cultural effect of MTS on the economy and culture of Aotearoa, as well as our koha towards the flourishing of the Māori language] (Muriwai, 2009, in Māori Television, 2009: 3).

<sup>75</sup> TG4 invests over €20m annually in original Irish programming from the independent production sector in Ireland, and its commissioned productions “sustain over 300 jobs in the production sector and has a wider impact on the economy, contributing to over 1400 jobs” (TG4, 2008: 10).

Māori Television has also commissioned an independent economic impact assessment study (carried out by BERL) on their contribution to the economy. Their “positive impact on the New Zealand economy” (Māori Television, 2009: 5) is shown in terms of their \$41.2m contribution to GDP, and employment of 570 fulltime equivalent people (Māori Television, 2009: 8; BERL, 2009).

<sup>76</sup> “The Minister, with the consent of the Minister for Finance, may from time to time pay to Teilifís na Gaeilge such an amount as he or she determines to be reasonable for the purposes of defraying the expenses incurred by Teilifís na Gaeilge in performing its functions” (Ireland, 2001: Part VI, section 51) and (Ireland, 2009: Part 2, section 34).

<sup>77</sup> (plus public service extras, e.g. Dáil Question Time). The station broadcast a total of around 9 Irish language hours per day in 1998, about one third of total transmission time, and a further 20% of home-produced programming (Foley, 1998: 9).

<sup>78</sup> There is 100% uninterrupted Māori language programming for seven hours every weekday across the two channels (Māori Television, 2009: 4).

<sup>79</sup> As a national public service broadcaster, TG4 is “accountable to a broad range of stakeholders, primary amongst which are our audiences, the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources and the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland” (TG4, 2010: 3). However, as a State company, TG4 belongs to the public: “Is comhlacht Stáit é TG4 – mar sin is leis an phobal é agus is é an tAire ionadaí an phobail atá i gceannas na Roinne” [TG4 is a State company – so it belongs to the people, and the Minister in charge of the Department is their representative] (Ó Gallchóir, e-mail 2010).

<sup>80</sup> Royal contrasts this with two other major world views- a Western (Judaean-Christian) one, with an external, overseeing God; and an Eastern, which focuses on meditation and finding peace within the self. The indigenous worldview, according to Royal, emphasizes how human beings relate to nature (sea, land, rivers, mountains, flora, and fauna) (2003). He also remarks on the difference between ‘natural’ and ‘formalised’ indigeneity (2010).

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- <sup>81</sup> Inspired by the success of Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau and Te Whakaruruhau, there was discussion in the 1980s and 1990s about the possibility of a Māori Media Authority, which would represent all broadcasters and interact on their behalf with the government (Allen, 1998: 134-5) – but this has not as yet come to pass.
- <sup>82</sup> “The Māori worldview as expressed through tikanga has a profound influence on our legislative framework, and is demonstrably for the betterment of all New Zealanders” (Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 37).
- <sup>83</sup> Te Pūtahi Pāho is made up of people from Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, Te Ataarangi Inc, Te Rūnanga o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, Te Tauihu o Ngā Wānanga, Ngā Kaiwhakapūmau i te Reo Māori, National Māori Council, Māori Women's Welfare League, Māori Congress, Te Whakaruruhau o Ngā Reo Irirangi Māori, Kawea Te Rongo and Ngā Aho Whakaari
- <sup>84</sup> Their role is “to give advice on matters of tikanga and kawa, make sure visitors to the station are greeted appropriately, help senior staff write speeches and accompany staff at events to “ensure that correct Māori protocols applicable to our industry are observed” (He Kaimahi Pukapuka Arataki, n.d.).
- <sup>85</sup> In the previous act, this was expressed as “able to speak and write proficiently in the Irish language” (section 44 (8) (b) Broadcasting Act 2001).
- <sup>86</sup> On 1st April 2007, TG4 became independent of RTÉ, after ten years under its shelter, or as Ó Ciardha put it “tréimshse altránais” [a period of fosterage] (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007).
- <sup>87</sup> Compared to the situation in Wales, where the BBC provides 630 hours per year to S4C, this is minimal. The overall spend on programming in Wales is also significantly higher (£44,000 per hour in 2008 to RTÉ's €30,000).
- <sup>88</sup> RTÉ and TG4 are also co-operating on a possible bilingual 'Diaspora' service for Irish people living abroad, branded RTÉ International (RTÉ, 2008: 20), but this project has been postponed by the current (2008-10) economic recession.
- <sup>89</sup> Māori Television also have an agreement with TV3 in relation to news. Māori Television have access to stock footage from TV3's news library, and both channels share contemporary news and sport pictures with each other where necessary. Each has the freedom to frame the images according to their own news values (Schuster, interview 2010).
- <sup>90</sup> This is what Māori Television aims to do in its depiction of relaxed fluent speakers, and the time given to mita [regional or iwi dialects] on Māori Television and on Te Reo.
- <sup>91</sup> The question of a standardised form of the language is discussed in Chapter 4.
- <sup>92</sup> Whilst the involvement of independent production companies from various parts of the country results in theory at least in a broad geographical range, it must be noted that, like most of the film-making population, the companies tend to cluster near their sources of income (Ní Bhrádaigh, 2008).
- <sup>93</sup> Máire Ní Neachtain asks whether TG4 might be implicated in a kind of Gaeltacht 'brain drain', drawing bright youngsters away from their communities (Ní Neachtain, 2008: 169).
- <sup>94</sup> The Pale was an area in the east of Ireland around Dublin under elite colonial rule in the 14th and 15th centuries, set apart from the rest of the country.
- <sup>95</sup> Cleve Barlow has suggested that Te Kore means chaos – a state which has always existed and which contains 'unlimited potential for being' (Barlow, 1991: 55). Māori Marsden, a Tai Tokerau elder and Anglican minister, had a similar belief. He said that Te Korekore (a variant of Te Kore) was 'the realm between non-being and being: that is the realm of potential being' (Marsden, 1992). Some believe that Te Kore is where the ultimate reality can be found. Others think that it is where Io, the Supreme Being, dwells. The idea of Te Kore is central to notions of mana (status), tapu (sacred and restricted customs) and mauri (life force) (Te Ara, n.d.). A version of the creation myth involving Te Kore may be found in Walker (Walker, 2001: 14-19).
- <sup>96</sup> On Friday evenings, crowds are often seen outside the main doors, waiting to enter the studios for the live recording of the karaoke show *Hōmai te Pakipaki*. Te Kokonga Kōrero (Speaker's Corner), a mini-studio accessible from the street, also allows members of the public to record a short message for broadcast on the channel. In general, studio-based programmes attract good audience turn-out (around four thousand people attended the 2009 final of the karaoke show *Hōmai te Pakipaki*), and the diasporic audience are drawn in through the internet (messaging and image service linked to GoogleEarth for Mātariki 2009 [the Māori new year]).
- <sup>97</sup> “Mar gheall ar chúiseanna éagsúla, d'éirigh go maith leis, agus sílim go bhfuil bá na bpolaiteoirí agus bá an phobail ag an staisiuin” [For a number of reasons, it [TG4] succeeded, and I think the station enjoys the goodwill of politicians and the public.] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007).

## CHAPTER 4

# LANGUAGE USE ON SCREEN AND ON SET: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF MĀORI TELEVISION AND TG4

*It is difficult to convey the scale of the challenge of operating successfully as an Irish language channel in the most competitive television market in Europe for a share of audience that is completely fluent in English, the dominant language of the television industry worldwide.*  
(TG4, 2005: 2)

Using a minority language in television broadcasting brings challenges, but it also brings opportunities, as the fusion of a minority language and the television medium affect each in turn. Existing televisual broadcasting conventions may need to change to reflect the distinctive worldview expressed and carried by each language, as will be discussed in Chapter 5. The exigencies of television production also have an effect on the language. From creating new terms, to broadcasting a variety of dialects to a wider audience, to merging traditional phrases with contemporary borrowings, the practicalities of programme-making have an impact on language attitude and use in the community. As a language and culture adapt to the 'distant immediacy' of television, new situations demand new words and ways of dealing with them. Common challenges faced by media outlets producing and broadcasting material in a lesser-used language occur both on screen and behind the scenes, including availability of fluent speakers with the requisite technical skills, identifying and reaching an audience, and linguistic issues such as the creation of new terminology, provision of subtitling or dubbing, and the treatment of dialects. A balancing act is constantly demanded by the dual purposes of the station (language performance/ revival and its appeal to a broad audience), as mentioned in Chapter 2. There is a danger of losing a real sense of culture through an overly populist approach, or of losing a wide audience through specialised programming. In this chapter, I explore how minority language broadcasters face these challenges, looking for solutions in practice and policy.

### 1 Reaching the Audience/s

*It's not about the 80,000 people at an Oasis concert - it's about the 200,000 people at the novena in Knock... or the 165,000 at the Ploughing Championships.* (Fennell, 2000: 41)

Higgins believes that audience figures should never be the dominant consideration for an indigenous language television broadcaster, which "should not be evaluated in terms of its ability to capture audiences because it's competing with other stations who are effectively operating on a commercial basis" (interview 2001). Carol Gunn, Marketing Manager at Māori Television, remarks also that "commercial considerations take second place to language and cultural considerations" (interview 2010), so that potentially higher profits and ratings are bounded by ethical limits. In any case, representatives from several indigenous minority language television services believe that the ratings figures derived from systems designed to measure trends in large-scale national broadcasters do not represent the full extent of their audiences (LaRose, interview 2008; Mather,

interview 2007; Moore, interview 2008; Kahi, 2009; BBC ALBA, 2009). Māori Television and TG4 therefore carry out some of their own audience research to find more qualitative data (Moore, interview 2008)<sup>1</sup>. As a publisher-broadcaster, the stations are in daily contact with producers from all over the country, which Ó Ciardha of TG4 considers as providing valuable additional feedback that complements ratings in 'knowing' the audience (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007).

TG4 figures two main audiences, the *croíphobal* [core audience]<sup>2</sup> and the less fluent. Ó Gallchóir speaks of the "*príomhsceideal*" [main schedule] and "*an sceideal tánaisteach*" [the secondary schedule] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007), differentiating the type of programmes in terms of their linguistic richness and in how they appeal to the two groups<sup>3</sup>. The same view exists in Māori Television, where there are

two very distinct audience segments - a general audience which also includes Māori and other New Zealanders... and a distinctive second group of viewers who we call our core audience. They're very traditional, they want to see programmes with strong Māori kaupapa (Mather, interview 2007).

It is interesting that management at TG4 mention the core audience first, but insist on their accessibility to all and play down the language factor, whereas in Māori Television they mention the general national audience first, but then describe in much greater detail the type of service offered to their core audience<sup>4</sup>. In fact, from 2009, Māori Television has adopted the division into three audience groups envisaged by Te Māngai Pāho in their 2008-2013 Statement of Intent: fluent Māori, particularly *whānau*; non-fluent Māori who are learning the language<sup>5</sup>; and Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders with an interest in *te ao Māori*/ the Māori world (2008: 15)<sup>6</sup>. TMP aims that each group (fluent, learners and 'receptive') should be provided with different proportions of *te reo* content (>70%, 30-70% and <30% respectively) (TMP, 2008: 6, 35)<sup>7</sup>.

No matter how 'committed', viewers do not usually tune in just because a station broadcasts in their own language; they demand interesting content as well<sup>8</sup>. People's media habits are often predicated on relaxation, and anything that requires extra effort is less likely to be viewed (Moring, 2007: 23). Tom Moring holds that in the absence of functional completeness, the spectator will not specially seek out the small window of opportunity in a 'strict preference' for the minority language material. However, in a situation where the viewer's interest in the language is motivated by a sense of identity, this condition may not play the defining role. In a survey of listeners to Irish language radio, 35% of respondents indicated that one of their reasons for listening was actually to improve their Irish language skills (MORI, 2004: 13)<sup>9</sup>. This trend is more pronounced in the case of television. Indeed, 85% of television viewers surveyed in 2008 indicated that they watch TG4 even though their Irish language level is not very good (TG4 Annual Report 2008: 10)<sup>10</sup>. Māori Television is also proud to claim that their programming draws in non-speakers: "We've taken those people who might have been inquisitive, and we've made them receptive. [There is now] a larger pool of

New Zealanders who are receptive to the notion of learning the language or hearing the language” (Parr, interview 2007)<sup>11</sup>.

In trying to reach its different audiences, a station must make compromises. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Māori Television has created a second channel (100% te reo) Te Reo to cater for its fluent older viewers, although this brings problems of its own, in splitting the audience between two stations and causing extra competition for Māori Television itself in prime time. Although proud of increased viewership figures, management at Māori Television recognise the need to balance programming “to meet the needs of both [audiences]” (Mather, interview 2007). There has been some unease about the proportion of the audience (more Pākehā people watch the station than do Māori (Parr, 2007, 2008))<sup>12</sup>, and according to Te Rito (Rongomaiwahine, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Rangitāne), the winning over of a non-Maori audience has happened at a price:

I believe we’re a warts and all culture – but with all the glamour and gloss of television, we’ve forgotten the reason for this channel: to promote Māori language and culture. They’re going for the visuals rather than the sound of the language. (Te Rito, interview 2006)

He sees the Monday night *Ngāti NRL* (provincial rugby league) programme, with its “expert English commentary” as a reflection of a “lack of commitment to the language and the importance of it [and indeed as] an insult” (Te Rito, interview 2006).

From the point of view of the broadcaster, however, the use of English is less insult than expediency. Māori Television and TG4, as national broadcasters, must speak to the wider audience of people with low ability in the first official national language. In both Ireland and New Zealand, learners outnumber native speakers. There are different degrees of acceptance of this, and sensitivity to the language ability of other people becomes a political decision, especially in the context of a nationally recognised indigenous language. For example, when Julian Wilcox interviewed Erima Henare, chair of Te Taura Whiri on Waitangi Day, both men spoke English rather than te reo, which Te Kāhui o Māhutonga see as a “unnecessary deference to the Pākehā (or in particular the English speaking) audience... [and]... a lost opportunity” (TkoM, 2009: 3, Issues 3).

Two main issues emerge when considering the use of English on a channel ostensibly established to promote and develop a different language. These are: power relations between a dominant (English) and a minoritised (Irish or te reo) language, and availability of material in the minority language. English language television programming is ubiquitous, and its acquisition costs less than to commission new programmes in the minoritised language<sup>13</sup>. Commissioning editors at both channels cite financial constraints as a major factor which limits the proportion of Irish/te reo programmes (Ní Chonláin, interview 2008; Schuster, interview 2010). Although it affects the ‘image’ and the aims of the channel, the necessity for English is often characterised by the stations as a means of hooking new audience members in<sup>14</sup>. It does seem an effective short-term solution to



the challenges of limited production capacity and reaching a wider audience. Of course, there is a difference between local programming which uses English, and imported English language series without any discernable relevance to the indigenous culture. It is to be hoped that the presence of such content on national minority language screens is a temporary measure, and as the industry and fluent audience grow, so will the use of the indigenous language on screen increase.

As the 'alternative' and 'cultural' channel in both countries, Māori Television and TG4 sometimes broadcast foreign-language (defined as neither indigenous nor English) programmes and films. As well as being an inventive way of filling schedules in the absence of a large archive of material in te reo or Irish, it is also part of a larger policy of opening national broadcasting to international work. These programmes appeal to an eclectic range of people, and perhaps not primarily to the traditional native speaker. Neither Māori Television and TG4 want access to depend on linguistic ability<sup>15</sup>. Ó Ciardha emphasises the responsibility of TG4 to reach out to everyone:

[Tá muid] ar an nGréasán ar fud an domhain – sin ar fad ár bpobal... agus tá na pobail sin ar fad i dteideal seirbhíse... Níor mhaith liomsa a rá go bhfuil ceart níos mó ag ball de phobal A, nó B nó C...” [[We are] on the internet all over the world- that is our public.. and all those communities are entitled to a service.. I wouldn't like to say that a member from group A or B or C has a greater right...] (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007)

The wish for access extends overseas, as evidenced in the range of promotional postcards for Māori Television and Te Reo channel produced in 2009. The postcards appeal to the reader to spread the word about online viewing: “Kōrero atu ki te whānau i rāwāhi - ka waatea ngā hōtaka ā-ipurangi me ngā kawepūrongo 24/7 huri noa i te ao!/ Tell the whānau overseas - Māori Television's online programmes are available 24/7 around the world!” (Māori Television, 2009)<sup>16</sup>. The imagined core audience of Ó hÉallaithe (quoted in Watson, 2003)(Gaeltacht-dwellers) is thus superseded by the actual majority audience (diasporic web-viewers, language learners and speakers who live outside the Gaeltacht). The development of technology has enabled the growth of Irish language speaking networks in non-traditional places (i.e. outside the Gaeltacht), and TG4 is well aware where potential audiences lie, “dar ndóigh tá pobal na Gaeltachta ann, ach seans mhaith go bhfuil daonra níos mó ag pobal na gaelscolaíochta” [of course there are the people of the Gaeltacht, but it's likely that the Irish language immersion education community has a greater population] (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007). Indeed, the director Paul Mercier recognises that “if the language is going to have a future, if it's going to progress, it's going to have to break out of the fixed ... view of [being] the sole preserve of the Gaeltacht” (interview 2001).

## **2 The Debate about Language 'Standards' on Television**

As discussed in Chapter 2, both Māori Television and TG4 have certain responsibilities in respect of their languages. However, there are different ways to interpret these. Some believe that a language is best promoted by explicitly extending the domains of its use (focusing on the educational), and others prefer to take a more subtle approach (favouring the entertainment aspect). Audiences and

practitioners alike have strong feelings about the way their language is treated and presented on screen, and these feelings are linked to the long history of language shift and retrieval outlined in Chapter 1. In this section, different points on the continuum of relationship with the language are adumbrated, and the role of the television broadcaster in respect of these explored.

A television station in a minority language is caught between reflecting and leading language practice. Mike Hollings (Ngāti Raukawa, former Chief Executive of Te Māngai Pāho) argues that Māori Television has an obligation to be a role model in language use, and to go beyond merely reflecting “the [diminished] linguistic environment that currently prevails” (2005: 114). Although TG4 is eager to foreground its entertainment role, the language still holds strong educational overtones. To many, TG4 is but another way of sugaring the pill of Irish<sup>17</sup>. Nonetheless, in presenting the minority language in a range of situations, television can contribute to a change in its image, and in the way people see its potential use. Quinton Hita, independent producer, regards television as a powerful creator of “artificial language domains”<sup>18</sup> which will serve as the foundation for ‘real life’ language domains in the future: “Television is like a surrogate home, and so it needs to fulfill all the language needs that a home would fulfill” (Hita, interview 2010). This means adopting different registers, both formal and informal. As Ó hÍfearnáin has it, “gineann [an teilifís] leanganacha nua den teanga agus tugann dlisteanacht do chineálacha eile” [[tv] creates new versions of the language and legitimises other kinds] (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2008: 97).

There are two inter-related areas to consider in presenting a minoritised language on screen: linguistic register and the image of the language. Merimeri Penfold draws attention to the fact that different registers of language exist: “e rua ngā ahuanaga o te reo: te reo rangatira, te reo whānau-he reo noa iho ia ra ia ra” [there are two sides to the reo: the chiefly, and the familiar- a normal everyday language] (Penfold, 2009). Television as a domestic medium lends itself to informal and conversational communication, yet a minority language may not always have that luxury. Larry Parr comments on a sort of double standard resulting from the situation of scarcity, where English-language programming is expected to use a range of speaking styles and registers, but material in the Māori language is expected to be “grammatically correct all the time... It’s taking the life out of the language to some extent” (Parr, interview 2007). Linguistic exactitude is not enough in itself to inspire audiences and to make excitement and life come forth, and there is little point in showcasing a false version or image of the language, as may occur when presenters are too ‘correct’ and over-scripted. In general, both TG4 and Māori Television use different standards for different genres. Children’s programmes tend to be of high linguistic quality, but in other areas they “can afford to be more flexible” (Fennell, 2000, cited in Ní Neachtain, 2000: 155). Ó Ciardha explains the rationale:

Tá difríocht idir an réim teanga agus caighdeán teanga a bhíonn ag craoltóirí gairmiúla agus an réim ag drama atá suite go chomhaimseartha sa Ghaeltacht - le bheith fireannach don

drama [There's a difference in the register and standard used by professional broadcasters and the register of a drama set in the contemporary Gaeltacht]. (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007)

However, Ní Laoire points out that on TG4 the prestige variety is that of the native speaker (Ní Laoire, 2008: 82), which is used for high status programmes such as the news, as well as being the 'norm' in programmes with people of mixed linguistic fluency.

One reason for accepting lesser standards of a language on screen is purely pragmatic – there are not enough high quality speakers to ensure a continuous and varied supply of guests, actors and presenters. The uneven mixing and reliance on English upsets some, but makes the language more accessible to others: “Unlike the antecedent lipservice which pretended that English did not exist, TG4 acknowledges the outsider view of Irish” (Lysaght: 2004a, 155). However accessible this linguistic compromise makes the channel to outsiders, it is imperative for the integrity of the minoritised language that its on-screen presence be shored up with material which originates from within fluent-speaking communities. Eithne O’Connell, John Walsh and Gearóid Denvir point out the dangers of insensitive translations from an English source which result in “cláracha le tionchar láidir Béarla, ach a bhfuil ‘*cuma na Gaeilge*’ orthu” [programmes with a strong English-language influence, and only the ‘appearance of being in the Irish language’] (O’Connell, Walsh & Denvir, 2008: 13). Pádraig Ó Mianáin refers to the importance of rhythm and turn of phrase which cannot be conveyed through literal translation (Ó Mianáin, 2008: 49). This aspect is also noted by Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, who remark on the way that English-language patterns have influenced the reo spoken by many learners:

While we work to preserve the way we speak, the greater challenge is to protect the way we think... One of the disturbing features of the modern Māori spoken by many learners of the language is that in syntax and idiom it sounds like Māori but feels like English. This could be perceived as a virtual colonisation of the Māori mind. Grammar is the soul of a language and the words its bones and flesh. (Te Kāhui o Mahutonga, 2009: 13-14).

## 2.1 Measuring Language ‘Quality’ on Screen

Language quality is not easy to describe, as it relies not only on correct syntax, appropriate lexis and register, but also on the spirit of the language. It is defined by Māori Television documents as “correctness of articulation” and “appropriateness of expression” (Māori Television, 2009: 4). The table of ‘key quality indicators for te reo Māori’, which serves as a guideline for producers and broadcasters (Māori Television, 2009: 4-6)<sup>19</sup>, has a ‘reo and tikanga’ section. This section includes the wairua [meanma/ spirit] of the language, which, along with correct grammar, should be “nurtured and respectfully treated” (Māori Television, 2009: 6)<sup>20</sup>. TG4 practices similarly rely strongly on the feel of native-speaking presenters or actors and directors for ‘good’ or appropriate language. It is often the case that scripts are used only as a springboard for the linguistic virtuosity of the fluent performer. Eruera Morgan, Head of the Te Reo channel and co-creator of the quality guidelines mentioned earlier, expresses his reluctance to codify the reo of such speakers:

My rule of thumb is ko wai tātou ki te whakahe i te reo o te tāngata- who am I to judge the language of anyone else? What you speak, whether it's in English or Irish or Māori, it's your whakaaro, it's your thought train, it's your IP, the process of your mind, and then you speak it. So we can't be measuring language as such. (Morgan, interview 2009)

While some scales are useful to ensure a minimum level of language quality, it is clear that the spirit of the language defies external measurement, and can only be apprehended by the fluent listener, and someone who is at home in the culture.

Measuring the quality and quantity of the language used on screen is an onerous task. TG4 relies on the linguistic ability of its staff to monitor the language content on an informal basis, whereas Māori Television works in conjunction with other national language bodies to ensure objective standards are met. For example, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori is contracted by Te Māngai Pāho to undertake bi-annual broadcast reviews of the quality of the language on externally acquired programmes on Māori Television (Māori Television, 2009: 6). Quantity is measured with a stopwatch, or based on timecodes, and only spoken reo counts.<sup>21</sup> Involved in the assessment process for Māori Television are the Programming Department and the Te Reo department. For all productions, in-house and external, a report on the percentage of reo content must be submitted by the reo consultant or kaitiaki, and a dvd copy of the programme must be sent in as part of the deliverables to be assessed six weeks in advance of screening<sup>22</sup>. The current documentation and work surrounding the use of the language is a stepping stone to its greater 'natural' use in the future.

### **Tearmaíocht [Terminology]**

All languages evolve and respond to their changing environment by modifying and creating structures and taking on new words<sup>23</sup>. For minoritised languages, this process is often more evident than in majority languages, because most 'new' ideas are introduced to the country through the medium of English, so that any adoption or translation into the minoritised language becomes instantly visible. The broadcast media are influential in creating and disseminating such terms<sup>24</sup>, so that there is a need for linguistically-creative people in the industry who have an appreciation for the integrity of their language as well as the expectations of their audience. Both te reo Māori and Irish are changing daily, like any other language, as new words appear. Although there are multiple official sources of new terminology in both Ireland (Rannóg an Aistriúcháin and An Coiste Téarmaíochta) and New Zealand (Te Puni Kōkiri and Te Taura Whiri), they move slowly and often do not have all the words needed for immediate broadcast. Without a definitive scholarly resource (or even monolingual dictionary, as in the case of the Irish language), minority language media invent terms daily and have to come to agreement between themselves on their use<sup>25</sup>.

Minority language broadcasters such as Māori Television and TG4 recognise the responsibility they have to provide new words or to revive older terms in order to speak to their audience in their own language. The next hurdle is to achieve acceptance of the terms by natural speakers. This is not

always easy, as neologisms may sometimes draw more from one dialect than another, or appear ‘unnatural’ to speakers accustomed to using the English term. Babe Kapa, Tumuaki Tari Reo me ngā Tikanga Māori/ Head of Department Reo and Tikanga at Māori Television, puts the creation of new vocabulary in the context of a long tradition:

Language itself is an evolving thing. We need new words. Words start off with whakapapa. They are created. The purpose of that new word now is to be used, because other words will come from it, in line with Māori tikanga. Start off somewhere, and as it evolves, it will get to the end of their whakapapa and it will be recreated again, so the cycle will go around” (Kapa, interview 2010)<sup>26</sup>.

Unless the word is used, its life cannot continue. The new words should be drawn from a real-life lineage, where possible, because people are more likely to use them. Producers from both iwi and Gaeltacht contexts have emphasised the necessity of communicating with the audience (Collier, 2007; Ní Ghadhra, 2008: 58-9), and media practitioners are aware of the distance between everyday speech and the lexis available from older literature or traditions.

Indeed, Quinton Hita comments that a knowledge of “beautiful verses” in te reo is not a valid substitute for “express[ing] daily needs... in te reo. Accept that some words become archaic and let them go” (Hita, 2009a). There is still a strong sense of incongruity in Irish as an everyday language,<sup>27</sup> as it was long associated with poetry and the domains of national ideology and high culture. Breandán Delap decries journalists’ use of hackneyed phrases drawn from a culture that is now foreign to many viewers: “táimid rócheanúil ar nathanna a bhfuil boladh na móna is na tuaithe orthu” [we’re too fond of phrases redolent with the aroma of turf and the rural] (Delap, 2007: 137). This situation is currently being reversed, as in the hothouse environment of live daily broadcasting, new registers for the language are being developed (Gruffyd Jones, 2007: 194). It is imperative for the television channel to reflect today’s language (Goan, 2008: 23), and to “demonstrate and promote the use of [the minoritised language] in new domains and in everyday settings” (TMP, SOI 2005-8: 24). This is necessary to reach the audience (Ní Ghadhra, 2008: 62). Ironically, it is sometimes the younger journalists who are most enamoured of the intricate phrasing of yesteryear. Te Anga Nathan finds that young journalists coming from a kura background are sometimes too flowery: “It’s the difference between whaikōrero and colloquial: Māori understood by the majority. Ko te mea nui ko te reo kia tika. We need the reo to be correct in structure, but easy to understand” (Nathan, quoted in Archie, 2007: 57).

Of course, all this is not to dismiss the old ways, but rather to expand the range and register of language to include some new ways in addition. Fishman’s version of ‘persistence’ in relation to language survival is that the new acts as a foil for the “messages” of the past, and in this new form, carries the language forward (Fishman, 1991: 387). Broadcasting professionals from Māori and Gaeltacht backgrounds also echo this argument. Babe Kapa recognises the need for all language forms to cross-pollinate: “We need the textbook Māori to support and hold up the tūturu Māori.

What we celebrate is that we're hearing Māori being spoken, and that is the essence of the revitalising of our reo" (Kapa, interview 2010). As new words increase, they interact with the old. As Máirín Ní Ghadhra puts it,

What we must not forget is that, while we are trying to keep up with this modern life, we are speaking an ancient language and that we should show a little respect for it when looking for terms which will be needed and used by generations long after us. (Ní Ghadhra, 2008: 62).

## 2.2 Dialect

The beginning of the Te Reo Māori me ngā Tikanga document produced by Māori Television in early 2008 sets out the aims of broadcasting: *'Whakapāhotia te reo rangatira, kia whānui, kia whāroa, kia tika, kia Māori.'* [Broadcast the Māori language so that it is widespread, far and near, so that it is correct and normalised (Māori Television website, 2008). This aim appears to be straightforward, but when there are several varieties of 'the' language in question, things become more nuanced. He aha te reo e kōrerohia ana? [What is this language that is being spoken?]<sup>28</sup> How might a national television station find a balance between regional dialects and a growing learners' 'dialect'?

A television station broadcasting to the nation and seeking a discrete image or brand faces the challenge of linguistic variety. In a situation where different dialects of a minority language exist, the choice is whether to 'flatten' them into a standardised broadcast version intelligible to all and favouring none over another, or to build on dialectal specificity and schedule a proportionate amount of screen time for each. The benefit of the latter is that audiences will identify strongly with their own familiar dialect, and although less drawn to other dialects, will appreciate their difference and novelty. The risk of a standardised version of the minority language is that it is at home in no place, and may be accepted by none. The process of stripping away geographic and cultural variation may remind viewers of the damage already done to their language in the colonial process. Older native speakers can see the standard version as bland and fake, although learners initially find it more approachable. On the other hand, without some kind of standard, or common zone shared by the dialects, it is difficult to arrange training and come to agreement on new words. Uí Chollatáin remarks that a standard can contribute to a sense of unity, and will strengthen the minority language media:

má táthar chun dul chun cinn a dhéanamh níl aon dabht ach go gcaithfear caighdeánú a dhéanamh má táthar chun athláithriú cultúir a chur i bhfeidhm go hiomlán i gcás na meán. [if there is to be progress, there is no doubt but that standardisation will have to occur, if the culture is to be re-instated at the centre of the media] (Uí Chollatáin, e-mail 2008)

There is a careful balance to be maintained in the development of any such 'standard' however, so that it does not diminish the living sources of the language, which are dialectal.

Whilst the dialect issue is less problematic in Ireland (after almost forty years of national radio broadcasting using the major varieties)<sup>29</sup>, it is central to iwi identity and mita survival in the Māori context, particularly as there are many more distinct mita than Irish canúintí. The issue is complicated, and Māori Television has not clearly stated its approach<sup>30</sup>. The independent producer Quinton Hita is concerned that in the 2009 draft rautaki presented by Māori Television, the word ‘iwi’ was avoided in favour of ‘communities’ (Hita, interview 2010). In practice, different mita are used on screen and in production, so it seems strange that the sources of the mita (the iwi) are not mentioned in the draft policy document. Joe Te Rito (former General Manager for Reo at Māori Television) is at pains to stress that the station does not “stop people from using their dialect” (2004). However, there are problems of fair representation across the various dialects, because some tribes (Tūhoe, for example) are stronger in the language than others, and people from these groups are more likely to be competent speakers and to be employed in the Māori language broadcasting sector (Berryman, interview 2007). Whilst TG4 has no explicit policy as to dialect representation, the aim is for fair coverage and access for all:

tá féinaitheantas agus ról ag na canúintí ar fad... Caithfidh spás a bheith ann do gach duine agus do gach canúint... agus do dhaoine atá ag foghlaim, nach bhfuil líofa. [all the dialects have self-recognition and a role to play... There has to be a space for everyone and for every dialect [including] people who are learning and are not fluent] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007)

Both Irish and te reo have a new ‘dialect’ or creole, which is a version of the language spoken by many learners, often acquired in school or outside traditional ‘native-speaking’ areas. It is based on books and does not usually have the same richness of expression as the older dialects, especially as learners forming their own sentences often rely on word-for-word translations from English, which has a very different syntactical structure to either Irish or te reo Māori. This learner ‘dialect’ (sometimes called Gaelscoilis in Ireland or reo kura in New Zealand) also takes its place on television, sometimes at the expense of the traditional dialects. In the social circles of many young people, the English language holds a greater ‘coolness’ value than the indigenous minoritised language. Medb Johnstone surmises that Béarlachas [anglicisms] may also serve to hide gaps in the learner’s vocabulary (Johnstone, e-mail 2010), so that the unsure speaker saves face<sup>31</sup>. The use of anglicisms in the media reflects this sort of language practice, although it alienates some more fluent speakers. Brian Ó Broin has noted that due to differences in quality and dialect, certain Irish speakers do not like listening to each other, and this is especially the case between native speakers and people who have learned the language in school (Ó Broin, 2010).

If Raidió na Gaeltachta [RnaG] successfully linked language varieties from the different Gaeltacht areas, it was somewhat to the exclusion of other Irish-speakers, as the rich blas [‘taste’/ accent] of the native speaker is often difficult for a learner accustomed to ‘Gaeilge tanaí’ [thin/ insubstantial Irish] pronounced with a school accent. Indeed Mac Conghaíl believes that this led to “éisteoirí tánaisteacha” [second-class listeners]<sup>32</sup> (Mac Conghaíl, 1992: 18). Whilst the great achievement of

RnaG was to strengthen inter-dialectal comprehension amongst native speakers, language learners were less able to follow the broadcasts. However, television provided learners with three important aids to understanding – visual cues (images, as well as on-screen translation), a cultural context and also the chance to hear their own less fluent ‘blas’ on a national broadcaster. A major section of the audience (non-fluent speakers) were now included on air. It has been remarked that in general, the blas on TG4 is different to that of RnaG (Ní Neachtain, 2000: 155-6), as the former gives more room to learners and diffident speakers. Of course, there is a danger that too much reliance on learner-level language will weaken the native-speaking prestige versions. However, the inclusion of the larger group encourages a growth of interest in the language outside its traditional domains, and perhaps lends extra urgency to the development of creative production in the Gaeltacht. Although their meeting is not always straightforward, the bringing together of language varieties of the learner and the native speaker is one of TG4’s most remarkable achievements<sup>33</sup>.

In practice, both TG4 and Māori Television operate using a mix of options. Regional varieties are heard in the voices of participants on the programmes, and a more standard (although regionally inflected) scripted version is used by presenters and newscasters<sup>34</sup>. Documentary voice-overs are often in the dialect of the programme-maker rather than that of the subject (a point which caused some debate in the Ngā Aho Whakaari hui 2007). The broadcasters are aware of the importance of regional diversity, and respect their origins. Eruera Morgan refers to iwi speakers as “champions of te reo” (Morgan, interview 2009). Paul Cummins of Telegael also mentions the need for planning so that there is equal representation of dialects on television, “nach mbeadh aon chanúint amháin ag fáil tús áite” (Cummins, interview 2008).

Another area to consider is the mixing of dialects within programmes. For a studio discussion, there is no problem, as each person is seen to come from a different place. However, in the case of a drama where family members speak wildly different versions of a language (as is the case in certain short films in Irish), verisimilitude is lost for the fluent-speaking viewer. Unlike more ‘organic’ versions of language change, this mixing is seen as false and jarring, although future generations may accept it in the absence of strong regional models. That such language mixing and dialectal meeting occurs in programming for young people (many of whom are learning the language at school) is likely to affect their future understanding of regional variation, as well as their own speech patterns<sup>35</sup>. Commissioning and acquisitions professionals from both channels are in favour of using a variety of dialects in children’s programming (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008; Schuster, interview 2010). Whilst exposure to dialectal variety is highly beneficial, familiarising viewers with the range of alternative forms in the language, it may come at the cost of dialectal specificity (encouraging awareness that certain words and phrases are not traditionally shared by all dialects). Fluency in its traditional sense usually implies a spoken mastery of one dialect, and comprehension of the others. Huirangi Waikerepuru argues that children need to hear their own mita, and



underlines the important role a television broadcaster may play in supporting this when the mita is not to be heard in the home (2009).

Although dialects may be mutually intelligible (as is the case with Irish canúintí and Māori mita), and similar in terms of grammar and syntax, differences in pronunciation and the particular words and phrases associated with each area make the dialects an important part of speakers' regional or tribal identity. If their dialect is not represented on the television service that is supposed to speak to/for them, the speakers may feel excluded. Morgan is intent that the diversity and richness of iwi mita be recognised on screen, and underlines the obligation of the channel to return to the pure sources of te reo ā iwi [iwi dialects] and record the elders<sup>36</sup>. Grassroots dialectal language from each rohe “ngā mita o ngā rohe huri noa i te motu” [the language from the different rohe all over the country] (Morgan, 2007) should be at the heart of the television broadcasting service. Respect for the mita also means a concern for its quality: “He rere kē te kouanga o ngā momo reo katoa... Ko te mita 'kia tika te whakahua” [Every type of language has its own quality. Each mita should be properly pronounced] (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 7). Obviously, the issue of dialect is most pertinent to those who can tell the difference. For many, dialect is the source and the richest form of both languages, and so the task of the broadcaster is to ensure that this richness is adequately recognised on set and on screen. The best resource for achieving this is the fluent-speaking communities (iwi in New Zealand, and Gaeltacht areas in Ireland). The people in these communities also constitute a key audience for the television service. However, there is another important audience to remember. Apart from the national majority-language audience (who may easily rely on the subtitling of native-speaker programming), the broadcaster is also obliged to cater for the growing sector of minority language-learners. This latter group are especially in need of programming that inspires them to persist with their learning, and that encourages them to use the language as an integral part of their lives. For this reason, the television broadcaster strives to reflect the language of these learners *as well as* presenting them with higher levels to which they can aspire.

### **2.3 Television language use/image and audiences**

There is a “paucity of empirical evidence” as to effects of MLM on language use (Cormack, 2007: 52). Indeed, the situation does not lend itself to easy measurement, as it is not a case of direct cause and effect. Integrally linked to other aspects of social life, the media is but one element in an ‘ecology of language’ (Haugen, 1972: 325). While many argue that television is not designed for language revival, but is primarily a forum for communication and entertainment, it is nonetheless clear that television can affect language in terms of attitude and image, if not actual use.

Whilst few would disagree that a socially varied environment has benefits for linguistic practice, scholars maintain that minority language media per se cannot be proved to have substantial effects

on language use. Fishman is often quoted as saying that the media is not effective in terms of Reversing Language Shift (1991: 107, 275; 2001: 473). Cormack points out that most broadcast media use quite limited language, in comparison to written forms (Cormack, 2007: 57). Although the media stretches language to some degree in creating new terms (Hourigan, 2001: 82), Hita notes that “no matter the quantity of television, certain vocabulary gaps will remain” (Hita, 2008)<sup>37</sup>. On the other hand, the way in which television provides exposure to linguistic variety “in the form of different dialects, registers and terminology” (Fiontar, 2009: 29) is more accessible to more people than might be achieved by radio or print media. The visual aspect of television has benefits for image creation and evolution which may positively affect language attitude if not language acquisition. It is evident that radio and television broadcasting in Irish and Māori has contributed to the number of people who now perceive the language as a part of their daily lives. According to Mane, iwi radio has had significant impact in normalising te reo (Ratuta & Rakuraku, 2007). She argues that before the growth of Māori language broadcast media, te reo was seen as “a disadvantage, so there has been quite a turnaround in attitude in some whānau and communities” (Mane, 2007). Ó Coileáin is also aware of the power and influence a broadcaster can wield in terms of attitudes and openness to culture and language, saying that the work being done in TG4 is “of the utmost importance” in changing people’s outlook on language and culture (interview 2008).

Cormack writes that although it is not clear in what ways the broadcast media may affect the language behaviours of the audience, there are three possible ways in which television might have an impact: didactic (showcasing new vocabulary and information, extending the corpus), encouraging (motivating learners and speakers through educational material and debate) and overt (direct promotion of language use) (Cormack, 2007: 60). The most evident aspect on both TG4 and Māori Television is the ‘encouraging’ function<sup>38</sup> which, I would argue, is broader than Cormack outlines here. Whatever the impact of the media on actual language use, it can certainly help in the promotion of a minority language, affording it “prestige and visibility” (Moring, 2007: 21). As a “high prestige promoter of oral culture” (Fiontar, 2009: 29), television has the potential to raise awareness about the language amongst non-speakers, whilst also bolstering the self-esteem of speakers. In making the language visible across a wider area and depicting it used normally in a variety of social domains onscreen, the television broadcaster demonstrates to sometimes isolated speakers that the language is viable and vibrant<sup>39</sup>. The glamour of television personalities and the proof of existence of speakers beyond the classroom or rural community setting makes the language more appealing to younger or less fluent speakers. When a wide range of fluent speakers in a variety of contemporary settings are regularly seen on television, the image of their language is anchored in the minds of the audience as something living and effective in modern life - even for those who do not speak the language, or who are unlikely to meet speakers of it (Le Morvan, 2000: 126)<sup>40</sup>. In order for people to speak the minority language unselfconsciously in public, they must regard it as an unremarkable or ‘normal’ method of communication, and the ubiquitous and

domestic nature of television can contribute to this ‘image normalisation’ by providing a range of genres, including entertainment and ‘trivial’ programmes.

For those who see minority language media as tools for explicit language learning, specific benefits inhere in the medium of television. Domestic, easy to access and ‘in tune’ with a viewer’s daily routine, television presents the unfamiliar (the language) in familiar guise (popular genres). Ó Conaire regards the resources of this technology as returning the language to the people via a ‘new hearth’ around which to gather and interact (Ó Conaire, 2010: 58)<sup>41</sup>. The TG4 Annual Report for 2008 explicitly mentions the wish of the channel to engage audiences with the language in their everyday lives: “it is critical that we help to ensure that Irish is part of daily life and that people are drawn to it through the entertaining content provided by TG4” (TG4 Annual Report: 35).

Research is currently being done on the role of Māori language broadcasting in the revitalisation of te reo Māori; and to examine the successful pedagogical elements of Māori language broadcasting in general (Mane, 2009)<sup>42</sup>. In fact, Poihipi’s study of Māori Television viewers in Dunedin shows that speakers of the indigenous minority language respond eagerly to television broadcasting, which seems to strengthen their sense of pride and identity, as well as encouraging their ability and wish to use te reo (Poihipi, 2007). Although the research sample was small, Poihipi’s findings indicate a positive relation between media profile and actual use of the language. Similarly, a TNS Conversa survey commissioned by Te Māngai Pāho in 2009 indicates that television comes second only to whānau in its power to influence language learning, and nearly half of the general population surveyed (over half of youth) believe that their understanding of te reo has improved after having watched or listened to Māori programmes (TNS Conversa, 2009: 10).

Indigenous language television may have further positive effects on community and family use of the language. Families can watch a variety of programmes in their chosen language, thus keeping their home a reo- or Irish-speaking zone. In a 2007 study of the use of Irish in the Gaeltacht, parents saw TG4 as a support:

díreach go mbeadh rudaí eile ar siúl trí mheán na Gaeilge agus meán eile ag teacht isteach sa teach trí Ghaeilge. [simply because other things were happening in Irish and another medium was coming into the house through Irish] (Ó Giollagáin, Mac Donnacha, Ní Shéaghda, Ní Chualáin & O’Brien, 2007: 44)

Another way is medium-specific, as the visual element of television makes it more attractive than radio to non-fluent speakers. As Thomas points out, “Unlike radio, television is semi-transparent and acquires an eavesdropping audience beyond the audience for whom it is intended” (Thomas, 1997: 5, quoted in Grin & Vaillancourt, 1999: 36). The advantage of the indigenous language television lies in its “visual and cultural attractiveness to audiences who are not fluent” (Mac Conghaíl, 1998: 29; Ní Neachtain, 2000: 155). Because of the visual element, shared media experiences become possible in bilingual families (Moring, 2007: 21), and non-speakers may

understand some of the programme with the aid of paralinguistic elements (Gruffyd Jones, 2007: 194; Kapa, interview 2010) – not to mention subtitles. The ‘live’ visual quality of television makes it vastly different from previous language learning materials:

mar go bhfuil an t-ábhar á chur trasna ar bhealach anchosúil leis an mbealach a ndéantar teagmháil le teanga go horgánach: i bhfoirm físe agus fuaim. *Is i bhfoirm físe agus fuaim a fhoghlaimítear teanga ón gcliabhán.* [because the material is put across in a very similar way to that in which we organically encounter language: in audio and visual form. *Languages are acquired from childhood in audio and visual form*] (emphasis in original) (Ó Conaire, 2010: 53)

Although it is difficult to prove what effect a media service has upon the quality and quantity of actual speakers, it seems that viewers pick up and use phrases commonly heard on television (Kelly-Holmes, 2001: 4; Lysaght, 2004a: 151; Mane, 2009). Pádraig Ó Mianáin is bringing up his children as Irish-speakers in a predominantly anglophone area, and relies on TG4 to provide extra language input, as well as ‘proof’ that there is an outside world in this language:

Tá ról le himirt ag an teilifís Ghaeilge i múnú agus i bhforbairt theanga na bpáistí, ag cur an tsaoil ina láthair agus ag tabhairt friotail dóibh leis an saol sin a láimhseáil. [Irish-language television has a role to play in shaping and developing the children’s language, presenting the world to them, and providing them with phrases to deal with that world] (Ó Mianáin, 2008: 45)

Ó Mianáin regards the informal language of the television as more useful in everyday life than the ‘school Irish’ the children get later. Anecdotal evidence also tells of the effect of television on young Māori-speakers in New Zealand, with schoolgirls texting each other using new words they saw on Māori Television (Edwards, 2009)<sup>43</sup>.

### **The Image of the Language**

The way the language is used on screen contributes to its image. Lís Ní Dhálaigh (Stiúrthóir Ceannachán & Aschuir/ Acquisitions & Output Director, TG4) points out that although TG4 presenters may come from a range of language backgrounds, the most prominent are from the Gaeltacht (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008). Commissioning editors at both TG4 and Māori Television emphasise the importance of having new young people and new ideas continuously coming in, as these are the basis for future development and life expectancy of the station (Ní Chonláin, interview 2008; Schuster, interview 2010). For TG4 in particular, a youthful image was encouraged as a counter to the old image of the Irish language; as Higgins notes: “the sheer youth of the station and the fact that it was representative of modern Irish creativity was a very important thing. I think they took the right decision in hiring as many fresh faces as possible” (Higgins, interview 2001). Some have claimed that the channel is “really designed for the next generation of Irish-speakers” (Geoghegan-Quinn, 1998: 12). This begs the question: what about the needs of older audiences? Hourigan notes a parallel difference in the age-group of the audiences for TG4 and RnaG, matching the age-group of most presenters (2003: 131), and wonders if in the portrayal of minority language speakers as “young, powerful and glamorous” the broadcasters has “aspirations to change the

collective identity of these communities” (2003: 132). Stiúrthóir Coimisiúnaithe/ Commissioning Director of TG4 Mícheál Ó Meallaigh admits that some older people may have been put off by this early emphasis on youth, but considers it worthwhile to ensure the survival of the language into the next generation:

Cinnte gur chuir an íomhá an-óg sin cuid de na sean daoine ón ndoras, cuid den lucht féachana ón doras, ach sin ráite, measaim go bhfuil sé níos tábhachtaí ag an am céanna go mbeadh an íomhá sin cruthaithe ag an tús. [Indeed this ‘young’ image put off some of the old people, or some of that audience, but having said that, I think it was important that such an image was created from the beginning] (Ó Meallaigh, interview 2008)

In the Māori world, older presenters are generally considered to be more culturally appropriate (Mane, 2009: 191). However, although Māoridom has a high regard for elders, there is also concern to reach a young audience for the television service. Schuster and Parr comment on how in the beginning, the channel drew an older audience, but now it is more evenly spread<sup>44</sup>. Joe Te Rito acknowledges the benefit for the image of the language in using “attractive youthful presenters” and underlines the importance of having a reo expert on site to “coach [them] up on pronunciation, flow [and] euphony off air before being recorded” (Te Rito, e-mail 2010). The emphasis on rehearsed on-screen language is not intended to sideline the real use of the language, but rather to achieve a certain standard and present a certain image until natural use of the language becomes the norm.

### 3 Language Use on Screen and on Set

The demands of daily broadcasting mean that it is not practical to wait for the ideal, so the minority language broadcaster needs to begin wherever the people are now. It is of course recognised in both countries that the process of regaining a language will not happen overnight. Huirangi Waikerepuru, who was central in the 1980s language campaigns, states that the strategy needs to run long-term, “maybe 100 years” (Waikerepuru, 2009). Gaeltacht producer Ciarán Ó Cofaigh is likewise under no illusion as to the timeframe required:

Tá tú ag caint ar rud *an-fadtéarmach*. Ní inniu nó inné a bhéas na rudaí seo bainte amach [...] Ní bheidh muid beo chun toradh ar obair TG4 a fheiceáil. Táimid ag iarraidh na céadta bliain de stair a iompú timpeall. [You’re talking about something *very* long-term. It won’t be today or tomorrow that these things are chiefted. [...] We won’t be alive to see the results of TG4’s work. We’re trying to turn around hundreds of years of history] (Ó Cofaigh, in Quinn, 2009: 15-6)

Given the timescale of the endeavour, Máire Ní Neachtain argues that the Irish language media must actively plan to help the development of the language: “[P]lanning must take place, policies must be set out, structures must be created to allow the language to develop, albeit as a minority language with all of its speakers competent speakers of the strongest world language in media terms” (Ní Neachtain, 2000: 158).

Whilst in practical terms the priority for both the Irish and Māori language television services seems to have been to set up the station first and deal with linguistic issues later, the language is a central part of planning. As Charles Berryman, former General Manager Reo and Tikanga points out, “There is an obligation to tīpuna who struggled for 30 years under the banner of te reo for this television service” (Berryman, interview 2007). However, although there was a similar struggle for language rights in Ireland, the different political and cultural circumstances there have meant that, unlike Māori Television, TG4 does not have a language policy per se<sup>45</sup>. This is not to suggest that the station is not committed to the language, but rather that so far, it is able to carry out its statutory aims without formal guidelines as to language use and quality.

TG4 and Māori Television differ in their approach to an in-house language policy because of the history of their respective languages in national society, and the status of the culture. Irish has had a stronger presence in national education and public life in Ireland than te reo Māori has had in New Zealand, and recent developments in community initiatives have resulted in an increase in status and strength for Irish. The number of speakers and people with a passive listening competence in the first national official language is greater in Ireland than in New Zealand, and there is a tradition of other language bodies also working in language promotion and development. In Ireland the work of codifying has been taken on (to varying degrees of success) by schools and An Coiste Tearmaíochta, which means that TG4 does not have to reinvent the wheel. In New Zealand, Māori Television is the first major national body which operates through and for te reo Māori. It therefore enjoys a support network which is younger and less established than that of TG4, and feels a stronger obligation to set some benchmarks. Māori Television has since 2007 had a General Manager for Reo and Tikanga Māori, a post not found in other stations in New Zealand - or indeed in the other minority language broadcasters I have seen. (Whilst there are language advisors and consultants, there is not a specific permanent role in this area.) The objective of the Reo Department is to ensure that reo is integrated within all programme creative processes and production (Kapa, interview 2010)<sup>46</sup>. The fact that Māori Television has a stand-alone Language Department is in itself an important point to note<sup>47</sup>. Māori Television is trying to formalise something that has not been done by any other institution in the state, to stretch and grow the language. It should also be remembered that there is as yet no other indigenous television broadcaster anywhere in the world with a language strategy (Mather, 2009)<sup>48</sup>.

TG4 has been criticised for its lack of a formalised language policy (O’Connell, Walsh & Denvir, 2008: 14), but management there have two cogent reasons for their practice<sup>49</sup>. One is that most people who work in and for the station are fluent speakers, which means that external monitoring is no more necessary than it would be for a majority language station. Another is that TG4 insists on its function as a television broadcaster above all else. Pól Ó Gallchóir, Ardstiúrthóir/ Director General of TG4, has said that the channel prefers to be seen as an entertaining media outlet which

happens to be in Irish (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008), rather than a language-promotion initiative which happens to broadcast on television<sup>50</sup>. Whilst native speakers seize on the possibilities of the media to tell stories from another perspective, language learners or non-fluent speakers tend to take the language itself as a theme which informs their work. An interesting contrast to the outlook of senior staff at TG4 is evident in the work of primarily non-native speaking directors whose drama sometimes uses the language itself as a theme, drawing attention to its social and cultural context (Lysaght, 2004b; Farley, 2007: 163; Barton, 2007: 158-9). It seems that the fluent speaker is more likely to eschew such foregrounding of the language. Máire Aoibhinn Ní Ógáin, Bainisteoir Sceidil/ Scheduling Manager for TG4, also comments on the tendency of many non-fluent speakers to reify the language:

[Ní] an dearcadh sin ag an cuid is mó de phobal labhartha na Gaeilge, sin rud a bhrúnn daoine eile orainn. Ní sainspéis é an teanga - is cuid dar saol í. [That view is not held by most of the Irish-speaking community – it's something other people impose on us. The language is not a 'special interest' - it's part of our lives] (Ní Ógáin, interview 2008)

Nonetheless, it is clear that no matter how 'normal' the minoritised language may appear to its fluent speakers, the exigencies of television production demand extra support in presenting such a face to the public.

### **3.1 Language on screen**

Translation is used to make broadcast material in the minority language accessible to a wider audience. This means using some form of the majority language, which can cause dilemmas for a television station charged with promoting the use of the minority language. The art of translating, be it for revoicing or subtitling, has been examined in the Irish context by translation studies scholar Eithne O'Connell, who points out that no translation is neutral, but is rather a 'third code' (original audio and visual being the first two) and in a way "poetic" (2007: 219), in so far as language is used in ways that are not expected. As each television channel is the first sustained 'live' national output device for the language which appeals to both fluent and non-fluent speakers, there are not many people skilled in the art of screen translation<sup>51</sup>. There is also pressure to translate quickly and accurately for broadcast, without losing the spirit of the language. Good translation of a script takes time, as does the process of subtitling itself<sup>52</sup>.

O'Connell has written extensively on the tendencies to disparity between the original script and the translation (from German to Irish) in children's programmes for Irish television, noting four features of translated scripts: 'normalisation' [interjections are rendered into complete sentences], 'levelling out' [standard is used rather than the slang of the original], 'simplification' [of syntax, style and lexis] and 'explication' [metaphors become similes] (O'Connell, 2003: 24-31)<sup>53</sup>. These tendencies result in part from the minoritised state of the language, as translators hesitate to use words or constructions which they may have had to research themselves, and consequently fear the

audience may not understand<sup>54</sup>. The result of such translation practices is to reduce diversity in the on-screen image of the minoritised language.

Two recent drama productions for TG4 provide rich examples of the intricacies of translation, illustrating that the relation between Irish and English is prominent on set, as well as being part of the on-screen story. *Rasaí na Gaillimhe* (Great Western Films, 2009) was written in English and translated into Irish later. It actually had to be translated twice, because the first version was too literal, and the (fluent Irish-speaking) director could not work with it (Brassil, interview 2010; Johnstone, e-mail 2010). Nonetheless, the final result was a credible drama, with mixing from both languages. The comedy series *An Crisis* (Wildfire films, 2010) was created in Irish (with snippets of Spanish, Hungarian and Ulster-Scots) by the Conamara writer Antoine Ó Flatharta, but the scripts had to be translated into English for the benefit of the crew and some of the non-fluent cast. Most current productions are made using both languages on set, even if the programme itself is all in Irish.

An interesting translation project for Māori Television was Rautakauri's production of the American sitcom *Mr Ed* (2008). The reversioning of *Mr Ed* avoided the high costs of producing comedy or drama from scratch, but succeeded in "having fun with the language" (Mohi, e-mail 2010). The scripts were not translated 'straight', but ad libbed and worked into a funnier and more relevant re-writing of the content to appeal to a local audience (for example, reference to the American Constitution in the series was modified to refer to the Treaty of Waitangi). Many viewers found it "a funnier programme in Māori than it ever was in English" (Schuster, interview 2010). Reversioning with a local twist demonstrates how clever translation can give a new complexion to imported material.

### **Revoicing** <sup>55</sup>

The issue of satisfying fluent and non-fluent audiences whilst remaining true to the original language spoken is more complicated in certain genres than in others. Although dubbing of English into Irish or Māori avoids the possible visual distraction of subtitling, it frustrates bilingual viewers who would prefer to hear the original utterance. This is a problem for the Māori Television daily news *Te Kāea*, where the English speech of interviewees which lasts longer than 8 seconds is given a te reo voice-over (Strickland, e-mail 2009)<sup>56</sup>. As no translation can be completely accurate, such covering over of the actual utterance can be dangerous. Joe Reddington, former teacher and now leas-eagarthóir/ co-editor of *Nuacht TG4*, remarks that although *Nuacht TG4* prefers, as far as possible, to avoid broadcasting comments in English, sometimes it is necessary for clarity or for legal reasons (interview 2008). Whilst necessary to accurately represent the words of somebody whose grasp of Irish is not great, the use of English for more 'serious' topics, or for direct quotes from the power brokers, seems to reinforce the status of Irish as less effective and requiring



translation when it comes to important matters. TG4 uses a mix of techniques to solve the dilemma when it comes to international documentaries, such as the *Fíorscéal* series, where the words of the original presenter/narrator are replaced with an Irish version (spoken by Maolra Mac Donnacha), but interviews play in their original language, with English subtitles (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008). This makes the viewing of an international documentary on TG4 at least a tri-lingual experience (audio Irish and another language, and visual English)<sup>57</sup>.

The problem with voice-over on news programmes arises because audiences are accustomed to receiving ‘unfiltered’ news (or at least news with no obvious linguistic filter). However, there is no such difficulty with entertainment, where the issue of verbatim accuracy is not considered to be important. TG4 have broadcast several series of the American reality show *Survivor* with an Irish language voice over. Children’s cartoons are dubbed and have optional subtitles. On TG4, the dubbing of children’s programmes has grown from 70 hours (pre-1999) to 200 hours per year, indicating the popularity and success of the translation type. Animation also lends itself better to dubbing than live action, where lip-synching is more difficult to achieve<sup>58</sup>.

### **Subtitling**

Subtitling policy is caught between meeting the aims of the station and the desire to reach a broad audience without alienating the core fluent speakers; for in anglophone countries at least, subtitles are not commonly used<sup>59</sup>. Subtitles also affect the image of the language. Many fluent speakers would prefer there to be no subtitles, because it means that the language is ‘normalised’ and given room to breathe. Paul Mercier for example has spoken of his “sense of achievement” at the fact that his short bilingual film *Lipservice* was made without subtitles (Mercier, interview 2001)<sup>60</sup>. However, it is frustrating for non-fluent viewers to watch a programme in the indigenous language without some form of linguistic crutch. New programming on the Te Reo channel has no subtitles, out of respect for the language and the target audience of fluent speakers, but the same programmes are subtitled for repeat on Māori Television.

In 1996, when *Teilifís na Gaeilge* began, the policy was to have no subtitles on the first broadcast of pre-recorded programmes, and to provide English and Irish-language subtitles on the second play (where financially possible) (O’Connell, 2007: 223). In the early days, subtitles were closed (i.e. optional, accessible by using teletext), but as many sets were not equipped with teletext, open (i.e. always visible) subtitles took their place. Since autumn 2000, in an attempt to attract a greater audience, there have been open English subtitles on all pre-recorded Irish language programmes (except music programmes with little dialogue)<sup>61</sup>. Some critics dislike the diminution of choice imposed by open subtitling: “[A]lmost surreptitiously, supposedly Irish-language broadcasting provision has become largely bilingual” (O’Connell, 2007: 259). However, the fluent speaker remains at an advantage. An interesting example of this may be seen on Māori Television, where

the long *te reo mihi* [greeting] at the beginning of *Te Kāea* is translated into English simply as ‘welcome’. Here, speakers of *te reo Māori* appreciate the full meaning of the *mihi*, whereas subtitle-readers come away with the impression of an opening or an invitation, but miss the full import of the message.

For learners or non-fluent speakers, translation can be a bridge to help them reach the target language by means of one they already know. Subtitling in English has, as a by-product, enabled a wider range of people to benefit from the programmes: the elderly, the deaf and immigrants<sup>62</sup>. That the station should be watched by these people, many of whom may not have any particular link to the minority language or culture, but who are poorly served by other national broadcasters, demonstrates the broader cultural context of the Māori Television and TG4 endeavour. The register used in subtitling is also important to note. In a paper on the TG4 drama series *Ros na Rún*, Gordon McCoy points out that its “colloquial Hiberno-English subtitles” tell the audience that the programme is for everyone (McCoy, 2003)<sup>63</sup>. On Māori Television, however, the tendency has been to avoid English colloquialism in favour of rather literal translations and sometimes arcane English words, e.g. ‘pertain’ is used frequently. Such a practice results in a sort of distancing – the subtitles are hard for people to read, and the viewer is constantly made aware that it is a translation. This has the effect of encouraging metalinguistic awareness, and in a way normalises the spoken *te reo* in comparison with the stilted written English. However, the situation results from practical difficulties, being a function of insufficient time or resources for the subtitlers to generate more ‘natural’ or conversational translations (Smallman, interview 2010).

Problems often arise in relation to the translation quality and technical delivery of subtitles. Due to the high volume of work, mistakes in accuracy may occur (Ó Mianáin, 2008: 49). These problems are common to RTÉ, TG4 and Māori Television, where time pressures and a shortage of skilled translators result in sometimes bizarre errors (Ní Nuadhain, e-mail 2010; Hita, interview 2010)<sup>64</sup>. As mentioned earlier, there are not yet many fully bilingual people from a Māori or Irish-language background who have trained as translators, although progress is occurring in this area. Current technology favours small-scale companies or individual translators, who may do contract work for the television station without having to leave their community.

To make the choice between outsourcing the work of translating and subtitling, or carrying it out in-house, broadcasters must consider issues of language and screen standards as well as logistical and technical requirements. TG4 relies on multiple translation companies for dialectal expertise (Ní Ógáin, interview 2008) and this work is overseen by TG4 for consistency (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008). So far, Māori Television uses a centralised system, where the station itself carries out subtitling, translations and provides *reo* and *tikanga* advice via its Te Reo and Tikanga Māori Department (Māori Television, 2009, *Pūrongo-ā-tau*: 14)<sup>65</sup>. Although the subtitlers at Māori

Television are from different iwi<sup>66</sup>, at the 2007 Nga Aho Whakaari hui, it was claimed that some Auckland-based subtitlers are not sensitive to the wairua of the reo spoken in programmes from other places. Independent producers, as well as Māori Television staff, agree that regional programme-makers should have a say in decisions about language and placement of text, because they have the most intimate knowledge about the intent of the programme, and are most eager to convey it to the audience (Collier, 2007; Morgan, interview 2009; Schuster, interview 2010)<sup>67</sup>.

There is a strong link between audience response and subtitling policy on both TG4 and Māori Television. Audience surveys in both countries show a positive or neutral response to subtitles. The 2008 Māori Programming Audience Survey Report found that most viewers actively wanted English subtitles (Te Māngai Pāho, Statement of Intent 2008-2013: 11). Surveys in Gaeltacht and non-Gaeltacht regions in the early 2000s showed no strong antipathy to subtitling - 74% people “didn’t mind” (Fennell, 2001: 60; MRBI, 2002) - and indeed if the subtitles are temporarily lost due to technical problems, many viewers phone in to complain, indicating that a significant portion of the audience depend on the English translation to enjoy the programme (Fennell, interview 2001). In 2009, Te Māngai Pāho decided to increase the proportion of contestable funding for “higher language content programming” because of evidence that more ‘receptive’ viewers (i.e. people who are not learning the language, but who are interested in the content) were watching high language-content programming than anticipated, thanks to the subtitles<sup>68</sup>. In this way, policy is adjusted to suit audience predilections:

There was a clear interest by these audiences in opening the doorway to a Māori world that would otherwise be closed to them. Previously we had tended to treat each group as a discrete audience and under-estimated the uptake of sub-titled programming. (TMP, 2009: 6-7)

This change means that there will now be proportionally more programmes with high levels of spoken reo (albeit married to English language subtitles) than bilingual or English language programmes whose only concession to things Māori was to be the difficult-to-define tikanga or cultural elements. However, despite the strong and divergent opinions of programme-makers, viewers and language enthusiasts about the simultaneous broadcast of different versions or translations, there is no clear empirical evidence one way or the other as to their effect on language learning. Koolstra, Peeters and Spinhof argue: “Many advantages and disadvantages assumed to result from the use of subtitling or dubbing actually depend greatly on the manner in which it is done, the genre of the programme, and the viewer” (Koolstra et al., 2002).

Subtitling in a minority language [fo-theidil Ghaeilge/ kupu hauraro te reo] is not usual for various reasons. In general, the spoken form of minority languages is much stronger than the written, so it is often deemed better to revoice rather than to subtitle non-locally-made programming. There is also confusion as to the contribution of subtitling to language learners’ comprehension and development. Although at the start of Māori Television, some foreign language feature films were

subtitled in te reo (Smallman, interview 2010)<sup>69</sup>, management do not see subtitling in the indigenous language as a priority (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007; Mather, interview 2007), and Mícheál Ó Meallaigh of TG4 argues that so far, the cost of such a service is not justified by the demand (interview 2008)<sup>70</sup>. Larry Parr, former General Manager of Programming at Māori Television, believes that subtitling English-language material in the indigenous language is not effective for language acquisition (interview 2007). On the other hand, whilst this may be true in the case of a viewer with a poor grasp of the minority language, Eithne O'Connell considers that a motivated learner actually benefits from 'reverse subtitles' (e.g. an English-language film with te reo subtitles) (O'Connell, 2007: 225).

There is also the possibility of adding minority language subtitles to a minority language audio track. Ó Conaire sees this as strengthening the impact of the language:

tá an-tábhacht ag baint le hábhar físe Gaeilge le trascríobh aonchineálach mar go soláthraíonn sé *leibhéal breise cumarsáide*. [there is great importance in transcribing Irish language visual material in the same language because it provides *an extra level of communication* (emphasis in original)] (Ó Conaire, 2010: 54)<sup>71</sup>

Not only would this be useful for the hard of hearing native speaker, but O'Connell also notes that it could also contribute to better inter-dialectal comprehension (2007: 259). There has been no discussion of this option so far with the Te Reo channel<sup>72</sup>. Some take the view that there is no need for te reo subtitles, as the value of the language resides in its oral form, and spoken te reo has its own mana.

### 3.2 Language on Set

*Beatha teanga í a labhairt.* [A language lives in being spoken.]

Both TG4 and Māori Television have so far concentrated more on the use of language on screen than on set. Although this is a valid interim response to the situation, it is not sufficient for the indigenous language to become something just for the 'face' of the programme, whilst all the background planning and conception takes place in English. TG4's 1995 Terms of Trade document states that Irish should be used for recordings, but does not specifically mention its use on set<sup>73</sup>. There are now moves towards ensuring a wider use of the language in production<sup>74</sup>. In their report on the proposed Rautaki Reo [Language Policy] at Māori Television (November 2009), Stephens and Edwards said: "The wānanga is of the view that there is no greater commitment that can be shown in the regeneration of the Māori language than to speak it" (Stephens & Edwards, 2009). This means that television staff and crews working for an institution dedicated to language growth should be speaking the language in the course of their work. Unseen and unheard by the general public, language practice 'behind the scenes' is of great importance to the project as a whole. For one thing, it demonstrates respect and a genuine commitment to the vision of the station. It also contributes to language use in the community, as it provides another arena or domain where the language is used normally.

On a practical level, broadcasting generates employment for some speakers of the minority language, in front of and behind the camera, and in ancillary industries (e.g. catering, cleaning, building) (Gruffyd Jones, 2007: 193; O'Connell, 2007: 260). This is critical to ensure that young people keep using their language<sup>75</sup>. There is a sense of pride when the ability to speak the language is valued as a necessary skill in carrying out the job, and the use of the language is normal in the work environment. There are few other national institutions (apart from government departments) in either Ireland or New Zealand where this occurs. Although the aspect of employment may seem to directly affect only a small proportion of the population, it should be remembered that in both Ireland and New Zealand, this numbers only around 4 million, so the ripple effect of the media outlet is therefore more significant than in countries with a larger population base. Within fluent-speaking Māori and Irish communities, most people actually personally know somebody who works in broadcasting.

Māori Television and TG4, whilst obliged to serve a national audience, draw their purpose from the communities of native-speakers who were instrumental in their establishment. However, the technical broadcast demands of a national television station cannot be completely met by the still emergent Gaeltacht and iwi production sector. A dilemma arises, as to focus solely on these communities may delay the delivery of broadcast quality material, and to focus on a more conventional type of broadcasting will exclude the storytelling style and concerns of the *croíphobail* [core communities], thus making a mockery of the aims of the station. The linguistic and cultural benefits of community-based productions are offset by organisational and technical lacunae. The solution - technical and business training - requires time and investment, and is also complicated by location. The optimum would be for such training to take place in the communities themselves, rather than in the centralised headquarters of the broadcaster. However, to do this requires more resources and more time.

As the television stations were set up and expected to broadcast before their hinterland had the chance to fully upskill, various solutions have been attempted. One is to use established production companies who operate through English, and to employ a language or cultural advisor to assist them. This often results in a more or less acceptable version of the language appearing on screen for broadcast without any version of it being used behind the scenes. True progress implies the natural use of the language on set, but because of the history in both countries, this is unlikely to happen by itself. In order to ensure the use of the indigenous language throughout the different phases of production, the television station must either commission only from fluent-speaking companies (an idea favoured by fluent speakers, but not by the broadcasters, as it greatly limits their pool of potential programme sources) or require certain aspects of the production to occur in the indigenous language (e.g. commands on set, delivery of budget). This somewhat prescriptive

approach may be the only way to achieve the use of the language behind the scenes until such time as enough technically-skilled fluent speakers are at work at all levels of the industry.

### **Staff Recruitment**

Three important standards apply in choosing staff to work in minority language media: whakapapa/ dúchas [cultural background and belonging], linguistic ability, and professional skills. Whilst the ideal is to find people with all three attributes, this is not always possible, and so the first two take on greater importance. Māori Television and TG4 are small stations, employing 174 and 80 core staff respectively (Māori Television, 2009: 42; TG4, n.d.). Whilst the majority of the staff at TG4 are fluent Irish-speakers, this is not the case at Māori Television, where several key staff positions are held by people who have neither familial nor cultural links to the Māori language<sup>76</sup>. Professional expertise and a degree of cultural knowledge in the absence of linguistic fluency can also cause upset, even where the people involved have impeccable whakapapa credentials. Joe Te Rito, who was General Manager of Māori Language and Culture at Māori Television in 2004, comments that at that stage, “the CEO and the Chairman were not Maori speakers, so there were different expectations of the quality and quantity of te reo used on the station” (interview 2006)<sup>77</sup>.

Language is imbricated with culture, and is the most important factor in creating the ethos and atmosphere of the minority language broadcaster. Therefore fluent speakers with cultural knowledge are vital to the kaupapa. Riggins makes a similar point about minority media in general, claiming that “[c]ultural knowledge and extensive contacts within the minority community seem to be more important than professional experience” (Riggins, 1992: 287). Professional skills can be learned and improved more easily than a language or a culture can become part of a person’s worldview. Māori Television, for example, seeks to employ people who “embrace language and tikanga... we are looking at those that have some or little reo, but a good attitude towards our tikanga” (Kapa, interview 2010)<sup>78</sup>. This pragmatic approach reflects a concern to develop native talent, but without a critical mass of fluent speakers within the station, it is difficult to create an atmosphere where te reo and tikanga can thrive. Hita believes that the service would be more ‘authentic’ if “they had bitten the bullet at the beginning and only hired fluent Māori speakers” (Hita, interview 2010).

Nonetheless, linguistic and cultural fluency are not sufficient in themselves in the long term, when professional expertise is also required. It is obvious that little quality broadcasting can occur in the absence of technical know-how and experience<sup>79</sup>. Strategies are therefore needed to recruit and deploy bilingual staff in an effective manner (Walsh & McLeod, 2008), so that people fluent in their indigenous language and culture can learn broadcast skills on the job. As there is a greater pool of fluent speakers of Irish in Ireland, this was the approach taken by TG4. Máire Aoibhinn Ní Ógáin, Bainisteoir Sceideal/ Scheduling Manager at TG4, reflects on the steep “learning curve” travelled by

many of the staff, including herself, who had not had much previous television experience (interview 2008). Te Anga Nathan (Te Aupouri, Ngāti Porou, Waikato), Kaiwhakahaere Matua - Kawepurongo/ General Manager of News and Current Affairs at Māori Television, also recalls the exponential increase in staff and experience since the early days (interview 2008)<sup>80</sup>. This demonstrates the positive contribution a television broadcaster may make to language status and use amongst fluent speakers in their working life.

The level of language support offered by the broadcaster varies across genres; for example at TG4 the news has an advisor, to ensure a certain standard (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008), whereas light entertainment or sports programmes may not<sup>81</sup>. The decision is taken based on the content and genre of the programme and the linguistic abilities of the production team. For productions where the director does not speak fluent Irish, a comhairleoir teanga [language advisor] is recommended to be on set. Even when there is some level of competence in the language, its use behind the scenes depends very much on the ‘vision’ of the production company (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010)<sup>82</sup>.

### **Language consultants**

Medb Johnstone (e-mail 2010) remarks on the practical challenges faced by comhairleoirí teanga when the quality of the language is not equally respected by all the crew:

Ní féidir le comhairleoir teanga an léiriúcháin a mhoilliú le moltaí gramadaí i gcónaí. Ach go háirithe nuair nach bhfuil tacaíocht ann ón gcuid eile den chriú, toisc nach cuma leo Gaeilge lofa a bheith ann, toisc nach dtuigeann siad céard atá á rá ar an gcéad dul síos. [The language advisor can't always delay the production with grammatical advice – especially when there is no support from the rest of the crew who don't care if there is terrible Irish because they don't understand what is being said in the first place].

The attitude of some such crews<sup>83</sup> is in opposition to that of most native speakers, who hold that the quality of Irish used should be the highest possible, on a par with technical standards such as lighting, acting and camerawork. Former Head of Programming at TG4 Cilian Fennell decries “easpa cruinnis de bharr easpa measa nó easpa tuisceana” [inaccuracy due to a lack of respect or due to a lack of understanding](Fennell, interview 2001). Regina Uí Chollatáin also underlines the importance of maintaining the quality of language in tandem with the quality of production values. She says that in order for a worthwhile media service to be provided for the whole community, both areas – language and broadcasting – must be of the highest standard:

Is tairseach tábhachtach do na meáin an tréimhse seo agus caithfear a bheith cúramach nach gcailltear an luas de bharr easpa caighdeáin ó thaobh cláracha agus ó thaobh teanga de. [This is an important threshold/ moment for the media, and we must be careful not to lose momentum due to poor standards of programme-making or language] (Uí Chollatáin, e-mail 2008)

Apart from the key issue of respect, poor quality language also means more time editing and revoicing afterwards, which adds to the cost and workload (Schuster, interview 2010; Johnstone, e-mail 2010; Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008).

In the Māori production context, a reo consultant is required by Te Māngai Pāho<sup>84</sup>. Since 2008, Māori Television have tended to follow this requirement, specifying the role of the consultant as follows: “Ngā Kaitiaki o Te Reo me ngā tikanga/ Te Reo and tikanga consultants will be responsible for quality and quantity delivery of Te Reo Māori during all stages of production from its conception, research, production and post production” (Māori Television, 2008). Haami has noted that this needs to be a separate role, and it is not appropriate to ask a fluent actor to act as language or cultural consultant (2007: 90). Unlike the situation in Ireland, where an advisor is chosen locally and informally by either TG4 or the external production company, reo consultants in New Zealand are drawn from a panel registered with Te Taura Whiri<sup>85</sup>. Babe Kapa, General Manager of Reo and Tikanga at Māori Television, sees the requirement (applicable equally to in-house as to external productions) as adding to the credibility of the channel (Kapa, interview 2010).

If language and tikanga are to be “nurtured with the utmost integrity... at all times of programming (Māori Television, 2008), then the cultural advisor or reo consultant should be involved from the original concept, and not merely in the production phase (Haami, 2009). A problem arises here, as although producers are obliged by Te Māngai Pāho to budget for a reo consultant, many only have the money to do the bare minimum, according to Larry Parr, Television Manager at TMP. In theory, the expertise of the consultant is recognised as a valuable contribution to the (national) audio-visual industry (Wolfgramm & Henry, 2010). However, there can be great frustration at insufficient planning or budgeting, so that the advisor cannot be present to oversee all phases from pre to post-production (McDonald, interview 2006; Tibble, 2009; Te Rito, e-mail 2010). This issue has also been highlighted in terms of respect for the reo skills of the consultants, who are not well remunerated for their work (Tibble, 2009; Schuster, interview 2010), and in terms of balancing expectations from Te Taura Whiri, Te Māngai Pāho and Māori Television (Edwards, 2009)<sup>86</sup>.

On TG4’s long-running soap *Ros na Rún* an iterative process of language quality assurance occurs, although this is in step with the production phases and not separated out explicitly. The starting point is templates or storylines, which are developed into scripts. The scripts are edited (mainly for content, although at this stage linguistic accuracy and verisimilitude may also be checked). For the shoot, a comhairleoir teanga is on hand to advise actors and directors, depending on their needs. Often, the actors are fluent native speakers, and are free to ad lib or adjust their lines to suit their own dialect (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008). This also occurs in other drama productions, where the actors may have a higher standard of Irish fluency than the scriptwriter or director (Johnstone, e-mail 2010). In cases where the actors’ linguistic competence is limited, the language advisor also acts as a dialogue coach.



## **Training for Language use on Set**

Support for and affirmation of the use of their respective languages internally is a strong feature of both Māori Television and TG4<sup>87</sup>. However, Māori Television operates in less favourable linguistic conditions than TG4, in that many of its staff are not fluent speakers of te reo, and there is also a smaller proportion of ‘passively competent’ viewers in the audience. The station has developed a focused language policy to address these issues. The Māori Television Rautaki Reo [Language Strategy] contains two elements: training staff so that the studios and sets will be reo (and tikanga) environments, and attaining certain levels of quality and quantity of reo on screen<sup>88</sup>. Between 2007 and 2010, detailed plans for language quality and quantity were developed by Māori Television<sup>89</sup>. Qualified translators or interpreters, as well as general cultural advisors and kaumātua [elders] contribute to the realisation of a standard. Te Māngai Pāho also makes explicit reference to the use of te reo on set in its draft guidelines for producers 2008-9 (TMP, 2008)<sup>90</sup>. This echoes the wishes of Māori Television: “It is... crucial that all production personnel work towards increasing their comprehension and knowledge of Te Reo me ngā Tikanga” (Māori Television, 2008).

Of 120 staff at Māori Television, only 20 are fluent in te reo Māori (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 1)<sup>91</sup>. The goal for 2014 is that reo use be ‘normalised’ in “at least one of the significant work environments of each department” and for 2024, that 100% of the staff will speak te reo (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 4)<sup>92</sup>. Over the past few years, te reo classes were offered on site, in which learners had a year to reach a basic level, and could choose to go further if they wished (Berryman, interview 2007). Such a pragmatic approach is essential in an industry with long hours and changing deadlines where people cannot commit to regular attendance at classes.<sup>93</sup> The very ambitious targets of Māori Television to have 50% of staff fluent by 2014 and 100% fluent by 2024 require enormous commitment on the part of staff and management. A Basque study of language acquisition for adults in the workplace, for example, notes that “a very substantial investment of time and effort, coupled with proactive management, is required to bring employees up to an appropriate level” and estimates this to take between 864 and 2160 hours (Cenoz & Perales, 1997: 266, cited in Walsh & McLeod, 2008: 30). This is clearly not achievable by providing language classes alone, and Berryman remarks that there is always “one component missing... the tikanga that can only be taught in the home” (Berryman, interview 2007).

Combining reo and tikanga in the environment of a production house is the natural progression for Quinton Hita of Kura Productions:

Running a company is the same as bringing up children. It is a long-term vision. I feel the same way. You have to be very gentle, and talk... as much as possible. Sometimes I just talk so that they can hear the words, and get used to constructions and phrases - not because I have anything particular to say. (Hita, interview 2010)

This bathing in a sonic environment may sound silly, but it is actually crucial to the development not only of fluency, but also of ease with the language. Some Māori production companies currently

operate solely through the medium of the indigenous language or have a reo policy (e.g. Kura, Māui, Cinco Cine), which enables them to build “Māori cultural architecture” (Hita, quoted in BERL 2009: 20). Although the creation of language zones may at the beginning seem forced, gradually any non-fluent staff become accustomed to it, developing a greater confidence and ability in speaking. Using the indigenous language ‘behind the scenes’ is also a source of pride for several Irish companies (e.g. Rosg, Scannáin Dobharchú, Telegael) (Ní Bhrádaigh, 2008: 147)<sup>94</sup>.

Respect for and use of the minoritised indigenous language in production is an integral part of the vision of both Māori Television and TG4. Although current practice is to use some English in situations where there are not enough fluent speakers in the crew, the aim is to increase the use of te reo or Irish. The use of the indigenous national language leads to interesting approaches to production, as the language carries with it distinctive cultural norms. This alterity also contributes to new images of the language on screen.

### **3.3 Broadcaster and Community**

In both Ireland and New Zealand, the establishment of the indigenous language television service brought with it a rapid acceleration of small production companies. Although steps had been taken to prepare for the new mediascape, growth outstripped training, and commentators have noted that new ventures like these are vulnerable to the pressures and precarious nature of the industry. New production companies often lack some of the creative, technical or business skills required (this last being the most urgent in the Irish language context (Ní Bhrádaigh, 2008: 151)). There are sometimes unrealistic expectations of the industry, as Joanna Paul reflects: “from a time when most Māori within the industry had been working in children’s, news or magazine programming, producers now have to deliver a much broader range of genres without the support of years of experience” (Paul, 2005: 44)<sup>95</sup>. Infrastructural and demographic factors can also hinder the establishment and continuing viability of small organisations, and Babe Kapa recognises that more support and local training is needed in order for a truly iwi-centric network to come into being (Kapa, interview 2010).

The benefits of locally-rooted production companies are obvious. Ní Bhrádaigh notes that TG4 has encouraged economic development in constituencies of high unemployment (most of which are in Gaeltacht areas)(Ní Bhrádaigh, 2008: 147). Irial Mac Murchú mentions the practical results of this for the Gaeltacht area An Rinn: when young skilled people can stay in the community, they contribute to its life in ways apart from their television work. They marry, bring up children in the indigenous language, and remain involved in sports and other local activities, thus keeping the language strong in its own environment (Mac Murchú, 2008: 158-9). The location of professionals in their various home areas from which they produce material contributes to a decentralisation of television images, as well as a different perspective on issues. It is recognised in both the Māori and

the Irish language milieu that a range of cultural benefits result from using the indigenous language as an integral part of the production process: “not just the Māori cultural insight it provides, but the perspective one can only gather when working the stories in one’s own language” (Paul, 2005: 44). The alternative perspective afforded to broadcasters by the use of the minoritised language is further explored in Chapter 5.

By working in tandem with other language bodies and businesses, as well as with the fluent-speaking communities, a minority language broadcaster can increase its potential impact. Indeed, various Māori Television Statements of Intent recognise the need to align with Te Māngai Pāho, Ngā Aho Whakaari and independent production houses (Māori Television SOI, 2006-7: 17). Iwi radio also served as inspiration for the television station. The models of training and production initiated by iwi radio were consciously concerned to be different from ‘mainstream’ industry practice (Mane, 2009: 115), as mentioned in Chapter 2, and a certain cultural credibility derives from their use. Not only are existing broadcasting ventures a valuable source of ideas, but they are also often a rich environment in which to find personnel<sup>96</sup>.

Gaeltacht producers (Mac Murchú, 2008: 159) and TG4 staff have been strong in their praise for the far-sighted training strategy of Údarás na Gaeltachta (the Gaeltacht development authority) which began in the late 1980s when the prospect of a separate television station was still uncertain:

Murach an dearcadh ceannródáil a bhí ag an Údarás 15 bliana ó shin, ní bheadh an earnáil léirithe sa Ghaeltacht ann le go bhféadfadh na cláracha a dhéanamh. [If it wasn’t for the pioneering vision of the Údarás 15 years ago, there wouldn’t be a production sector in the Gaeltacht to make these programmes]. (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007)

Ireland also has a good history of independent television production since 1993, when the RTÉ Independent Productions Unit was set up at the behest of Michael D. Higgins, the then Minister for the Arts (Ireland, 1993). This means that there is a range of production talent scattered around the country, and localised in companies which specialise in alternative programming. However, the mushrooming of small companies may not be sustainable in the long-term (Ní Bhrádaigh, 2008; Graham, interview 2009). A useful training model for a sparsely-populated production sector is where a well-established production house acts as a hub or resource for developing companies. An example of this is Telegael, which was established with help from Údarás na Gaeltachta in the late 1980s, and has now become a centre of knowledge and experience upon which independent production companies may draw. Telegael’s facilities and skills are an invaluable resource for local producers (Cummins, interview 2008). The Gaeltacht-based ROSG also organises training and workshops, as well as providing on-set work experience for trainees (Ó Cofaigh, in Quinn, 2009). However, like many Irish production companies, ROSG is small. To extend the possibilities of ‘real-life’ training, another scheme was initiated by TG4 and Údarás na Gaeltachta in 2008, where nine mentors or oifigeach forbartha léiriúcháin [production development officer] were placed with

Gaeltacht production houses, with the brief to work on developing new ideas for that company over the course of a year (AR 2008: 28).

### **Training for Production Skills in the Community**

After the first blossoming of Gaeltacht productions at the launch of *Teilfís na Gaeilge*, Cilian Fennell was concerned that without strong Gaeltacht input, the service might slip into the role of ‘cultural’ channel à la National Geographic, where the station would cater almost entirely for the outsider audience. Indeed, Niall Mac Eachmharcaigh, director of *Lios na Sí Teo* and creator of two successful comedy series for TG4, is disappointed at what he considers the unsatisfactory realisation of a Gaeltacht voice and vision on screen. He believes that the concessions made by Gaeltacht-based companies for the benefit of the station<sup>97</sup> have not been reciprocated, and that TG4 actually favours larger-scale production companies (most of which tend to operate primarily in English) for generic commissioning (Mac Eachmharcaigh, 2008: 163). The scholar Emer Ní Bhrádaigh comments that some Gaeltacht-based production companies were taken aback when TG4 sourced programming from more established non-Gaeltacht based companies, who did not use the language behind the scenes (Ní Bhrádaigh, 2008: 142-3). There is similar disquiet in the Māori production environment, where Te Kāhui o Mahutonga and representatives of Ngā Aho Whakaari have expressed concern as to the reliance of Māori Television on Pākehā production houses (Collier, 2007; Kahi, 2010; TKoM, 2009: 3). Quinton Hita states that the majority of current independent production companies, even those owned by Māori, have no iwi affiliation: “They were brought up Pākehā, they live Pākehā, but make Māori money” (Hita, interview 2010). The involvement of companies which are not rooted in the indigenous language or culture raises potential problems in relation to representation, ‘authenticity’ and indeed the purpose of the television station. These issues are explored more deeply in Chapter 5.

A possible solution to this difficulty is to strengthen links between broadcaster and community, and in particular, to support training and development in media skills in the regions<sup>98</sup>. TG4 Eagarthóir Coimisiúnaithe/ Commissioning Editor Proinsias Ní Ghráinne states that the channel has a duty to develop Gaeltacht writers first, before turning to writers from other places. At present, there is a good level of support, although some is geographically limited<sup>99</sup>. Manutai Schuster, Tumuaki Kohinga Whakaata/ Head of Acquisitions & Commissioning at Māori Television and Máire Ní Chonláin, Eagarthóir Coimisiúnaithe/ Commissioning Editor at TG4, have both remarked on the attempts of their respective channels to encourage and develop people with good ideas, but who have not yet accumulated much production experience. Schuster (interview 2010) cites the case of an inexperienced producer with a good idea, who was directed towards a more established company, so that the idea could be developed with their help. Ní Chonláin (interview 2008) reflects on the importance of developing young talent from Gaeltacht areas. She remarks that often there is great talent hidden by shyness, and that local workshops could help to develop writers and actors

in a familiar and encouraging environment<sup>100</sup>. Hita acknowledges that a long-term view is essential in providing such initiatives, but that engaging in community training is the only way the indigenous language broadcaster can maintain contact with their purpose, which is to promote and present their language and culture on television (Hita, interview 2010)<sup>101</sup>.

When Teilifís na Gaeilge began filming the soap opera *Ros na Rún* in the 1990s, there were fears that the influx of English-speaking television professionals would weaken the Irish spoken in the area, but in fact as native talent has developed, this fear has abated (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007). However, Johnstone (e-mail 2010) remarks that incoming productions do not necessarily employ local people or people with Irish unless it is strictly necessary. This means that the presence of television production may still have negative effects on the habitat of the language. Several Gaeltacht television professionals have suggested that TG4 might safeguard the language better in such situations. Irial Mac Murchú, for example, considers that a language policy from TG4 (for example, that all the paperwork and behind the scenes work be in Irish) would greatly benefit Gaeltacht companies, and encourage the employment of Gaeltacht people in non-Gaeltacht companies too (2008: 160). However, such a move could cut out a significant proportion of technically-skilled production staff, and thus compromise the rate and range of production material delivered to the broadcaster. A policy that is overly prescriptive would risk alienating some talented people, and perhaps give the impression that the television station provides sinecures for fluent speakers rather than a broadcasting service to serve the whole country.

However detailed a language policy might be, progress in language use on set can only occur if fluent-speakers are at the origin of any such plan. Hita's view that "self-sufficient production companies that function as language domains" is the only way to get reo-speaking crew on set (Hita, 2009: 7) is compelling. It depends on there being good speakers at management level in the company, and genuine effort from all involved<sup>102</sup>. The small size of these independent companies (most employing between two and five full-time staff, with up to 80-100 contract workers throughout the year) is an advantage in that it enables a 'cosy' familial atmosphere conducive to language learning. However, their small size also means that fluent speakers have a lot of other work to do as well as nurturing their colleagues, and the short-term nature of contract work means that there is not a long enough timeframe to develop language competence at a deep level. "We don't have all the time we need to help someone get that level of fluency. But we are contributing" (Hita, interview 2010).

### **Critics**

Lambasted in the press by many journalists before it even went on air, and denied equal column space with more established channels in (of all publications) *The RTÉ Guide*, Teilifís na Gaeilge had to tackle the distrust born of the complex (and often obfuscated) relations between actual language

use and official cant. Indeed, one of the early difficulties faced by both stations was the lesser degree of visibility afforded to their listings in national newspapers and magazines, which was kept to a minimum- often half or one-third of a column as opposed to the full column afforded to other national and international broadcasters<sup>103</sup>. Whilst the Māori Television listings were shifted to same level as other channels in December 2009, they still receive less space (Gunn, interview 2010; Palmer, interview 2010). It is interesting to speculate as to why national publications do not allow equal space to national broadcasters as a matter of course. At the beginning, a limited schedule may need only a limited space; but as the schedule grows, it seems pointed that more space is not provided. This is part of the 'visibility' or image of the minority language.

Goan notes that in the beginning, *Teilifís na Gaeilge* was never judged on its own terms, but by people "who were either not conversant with what we wanted to do or the language in which we wanted to do it" (Goan, 2002, quoted in Hourigan, 2003: 121). Māori Television were similarly accustomed to operating below the radar of the New Zealand critics, as journalists were interested in workings and scandals at the station rather than programme content, until these latter were challenged and impressed by the way the new station tackled one of the country's major national commemorations. Māori Television now seemed to be secure, as Parr reflects: "The volume of critical acclaim that we got after the Anzac Day coverage changed our lives" (Parr, interview 2007). It raised the profile of the station, and epitomised what Smith and Abel (2007) refer to as the 'bicultural benevolence' phase. TG4 have also garnered critical acclaim for their travel, documentary and drama programmes. Both stations have found that whilst reviews are generally positive, they are not always abundant (Mather, interview 2007; Ó Meallaigh, e-mail 2010)<sup>104</sup>. Recent developments in Ireland seem positive,<sup>105</sup> but many television reviewers lack the linguistic skill necessary to appreciate the nuances, and rely on subtitling (thus missing much of the message); or alternatively review the non-indigenous language material on the station instead. It must also be pointed out that this comment- some people's only gateway to the channel in question- is in most cases written in the dominant language (Cormack, 2007: 56). There is also a strong bias in favour of the lighter genres, with very few reviews focusing on current affairs, for example. Ó Meallaigh remarks that many of the "indigenous gems" slip through the net (Ó Meallaigh, e-mail 2010).

Intelligent criticism is important to the existence and success of the channel. Familiarity with the language and culture will help in coming to a considered opinion as to the value of the television station. In a small language community, however, sometimes it can be hard to be critical. Several commentators have noted that minority groups feel affinity to their broadcasting representatives, and that they have a stake in their media. This is heightened in cases where majority voices denigrate the service, or where the financial future is uncertain. Delap comments on the sense of loyalty TG4 evokes: "most committed Irish-speakers feel they have a stake in their language media.

They apply rigorous standards of judgement amongst themselves but will strongly defend it in public” (Delap, 2007:159). Whilst such a sense of ownership encourages audience identification with the broadcaster and is very valuable in a multi-channel environment, it can detract from the ability to cast a dispassionate critical eye on the work and to express such criticism in public forums. What is needed is a new generation of critics, who are culturally rooted, bilingual and unafraid.

## Conclusion

Both Māori Television and TG4 rely on the energy and commitment of their staff to continue in the challenging environment of minority language broadcasting. Almost everybody interviewed commented in some way on the special atmosphere in the station, and the sense that colleagues were working together, for example Lís Ní Dhálaigh from TG4 notes:

[Tá] go leor den fhuinneamh dírithe ar rud níos mó ná an gnó- paisean an-láidir.. [Tagann sé sin as] na cineál daoine atá ag obair anseo. [a lot of energy directed at something greater than the business- very strong passion.. [This comes from] the kind of people working here] (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008)

Similarly, in Māori Television, a sense of working collectively for something more important than production of a programme came through:

Māori Television promote tikanga and te reo. When you are able to work in a place where the majority is Māori, you don't have to explain things, the culture is just a given. It's a place where there is support. We are all working towards something greater - people believe in it. (Palmer, interview 2010)<sup>106</sup>

Similarly, for a large number of native-speakers and culturally-connected people in the industry, making programmes for the indigenous language channel is more than just a job (Mac Murchú, 2008: 159). There is a strong awareness of being able to see in two ways, or to “walk in two worlds” (Mane-Wheoki, interview 2010). Ní Ógáin comments on the recognition of being both similar to and separate from the majority of people in the country, because of the language and its attendant cultural outlook, and sees in it a source of pride: “[Tá] féiniúlacht againn féin agus misneach againn asainn féin” [We have our own identity and we are confident in ourselves] (Ní Ógáin, interview 2008). Mac Donnacha notes that TG4 is a broadcasting service “a bhfuil pobal dá cuid féin aici” [which has its own community] (Mac Donnacha, 2008: 111), and in this, he differentiates community from audience – the community has ownership. Tearepa Kahi (Ngāti Paoa, Waikato), chairman of the Māori producers group Ngā Aho Whakaari, similarly looks on Māori Television as one part of a collective effort:

On paper, its purpose is to promote reo and tikanga on screen. The reality is Māori Television carries our hopes, dreams, culture identity and future forward into our whare, kura and industry, everyday [sic], irrespective of who is working inside the building or without... [W]e all share whakapapa. And we all represent different facets of the same kaupapa. (Kahi, 2008)

Television broadcasting gives the indigenous national language wider visibility to more people, and extends the range of domains in which the language is spoken (on set, in business) and is seen to be

spoken (range of genres). Language content and variety are adjusted to reach different audiences, who have differing degrees of engagement with the language and culture. The image presented is one of diversity and inclusiveness, with an intense awareness about possible relations between real-life language and the on-screen world. The depiction of the language on screen, although not reflecting contemporary use, creates a new potential world for younger audiences. The power of representation is in the hands of broadcasters and production companies, many of whom are not native speakers. Fluency in the language and culture is vital to ability to create resonant images, and to contribute to realising the creative potential of the people whose language it is.

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<sup>1</sup> TG4 derives its audience research from Nielsen, regular focus groups (with four sampling points), an annual survey (including people who don't watch the channel), as well as internal monitoring on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. The station also has contact with the public through letters, complaints, lobby groups, and critical reviews (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008). Since 2010, TG4 has also had an Audience Council (TG4, 2010: 11).

<sup>2</sup> "Is ball den chroíphobal aon duine a úsáideann Gaeilge" [the core public is anyone who uses Irish] (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007).

<sup>3</sup> The sub-sets of these groups are described as "those fluent in Irish, those with some Irish, those with little or no knowledge of the language and those with an interest in Irish culture, sport and heritage" (TG4, 2008: 6).

<sup>4</sup> TG4 is often portrayed as being caught between two audiences – the fluent and the not-so-fluent (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2000: 114), but Ó Gallchóir (interview 2007) figures it less as a language divide and more connected to the type of programming shown, characterizing the audiences as "an lucht féachana laethúil (sa teach) agus an pobal (mór imeachtaí)" [the daily audience (at home) and the community (major events)]. Into this latter category falls programming which appeals to the 'nation'. Although Maori Television targets its audiences specifically in relation to their language level, they might also go along 'event' and 'domestic' lines. The lifestyle and regular programmes appeal to the core, and the special events (like Anzac Day or one-off documentaries) reach the broader audience of 'New Zealanders'. In effect, different terms are used to express a similar division.

<sup>5</sup> Te Māngai Pāho, on the other hand, does not specify that the language-learners necessarily *be* Maori (TMP, SOI 2008-2013: 6).

<sup>6</sup> For the programme ranges targeted at each of their three audiences, each has a distinct purpose: supporting intergenerational transmission, providing language learning opportunities, and promoting the status of te reo Maori (TMP, 2009: 15).

<sup>7</sup> In 2007, c 250 hours of programming each were funded for fluent and learners, and 125 hours for receptive audience (but strangely, more money was spent on the programmes for the receptive audience: \$8,390, 954; \$7,882,458 and \$9,259,767 respectively (TMP, AR 2008: 10-11)). These programmes were broadcast primarily on Māori Television, although some were for TVNZ.

<sup>8</sup> A recent Te Māngai Pāho survey found that younger people (aged 15-39) watched a Māori television programme to be entertained, whereas the older group (aged 55+) did so for local news and information (TNS Conversa, 2009: 25). Neither watched explicitly for the purpose of language acquisition.

<sup>9</sup> 33% listened for fun and 26% for community information (MORI, 2004: 13). The same study found that most listeners to Irish language radio live outside the Gaeltacht and are not fluent speakers (MORI, 2004: 25).  
<sup>10</sup> A similar pattern is seen in Scotland, where parents watch the new BBC ALBA service with their children in order to improve their language skills, as expressed by one viewer: "I watch BBC2 cbeebies every morning for 30 minutes with my 4 year-old, e.g. *Charlie is Lola*, *Clifford*, *Sgriobag*. It helps us both with the language. My 4



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year-old is at Gaelic nursery and can tell me what the characters are saying, so the kids programmes are fantastic for me” (BBC ALBA, 2009: 19).

<sup>11</sup> Browne has noted that little is known about the response of the majority language audience to minority language broadcast material (Browne, 1996: 236), and this is an area for future research.

<sup>12</sup> This actually reflects the demographics of NZ, where almost 15% of the population is Māori and around 65% Pākehā (Census, 2006). In fact, proportionately more Māori than non-Māori people watched the channel in 2006 (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> The link between the English language and economic power in Ireland is to be seen in the way advertising was made for TG4. Early advertising was dubbed into Irish. Local businesses took greater care to make the ad with regard to the language, whereas bigger companies ‘wimped out’ with logos in English, and merely a voice over in Irish (McBride, 1997: 33). Now, however, the vast majority of the ads remain in their original language, English.

<sup>14</sup> In the 2005 Annual Report, Māori Television considered that 100% te reo would be offputting for the general population, and not “inclusive” (Māori Television, 2005: 14).

<sup>15</sup> Ó Gallchóir (interview 2008) makes a similar point, reflecting on the perceived ‘closed door’ policy of many pre-TG4 broadcast efforts in Irish: “Nílimid ag iarraidh daoine nach bhfuil Gaeilge líofa acu a chur ó dhoras. Nílimid ag iarraidh an cóirnéail seo a chruthú, an cóirnéail Gaelach, agus muna bhfuil tusa in ann an Ghaeilge seo a thuiscint, fan uainn – sin na sean laethenta... Ins an saol nua, [b’fhearr liom] encouragement a thabhairt do gach duine... breathnú ar ár gcultúr, ár gcláracha agus a bheith ag ceiliúradh agus ag baint sult as inár gcuideachta [We don’t want to turn away anyone who is not fluent in Irish. We’re not trying to create this little ‘Irish’ corner where, if you can’t follow the language, you can stay away from us. Those were the old days. Nowadays, [we aim to give] encouragement to everyone... to look at our culture, our programmes, and celebrate and enjoy them in our company].

<sup>16</sup> Both Maori Television and TG4 have a bilingual web presence which provides weekly schedules, archive shows for free on-demand viewing, a live streaming option, and a corporate section with access to documents such as annual reports and guidelines for producers. The two websites of TG4’s highly-developed web service (the best in Ireland so far) are accessed from all over the world. A particularly high proportion are from the USA, long a destination for Irish emigrants and home to many people who consider themselves part of the diaspora by nationality or by inheritance. TG4 website hits have been steadily growing since the service was first introduced: 23% more webvisitors (430,000) and 18% more webstream in 2008 (TG4, 2008: 11). The Maori Television website (redesigned in 2009) also has a separate site devoted to the Te Reo channel, which is less extensive. The Māori Television website gets 25-30,000 visits per month, about 15,000 of which are from unique browsers. 20% of the hits come from Australia, which is home to many Māori emigrés (Palmer, interview 2010).

<sup>17</sup> Higgins appealed to this sector of society in a speech before the launch of TnaG: “[T]ugann TnaG deis iontach dúinn go léir tabhairt faoi mhúineadh na Gaeilge ar bhealach nua, nua-aoiseach, tarraingteach” [TnaG gives us all a wonderful chance to approach the teaching of Irish in a new way; a way that is up-to-date and attractive] (Higgins, in Ireland, 1994).

<sup>18</sup> Whilst Fishman characterises media without a complementary social and community language thrust as an “artificial life support system” (Fishman, 1991: 246), Hita’s “domains” are figured as a crucible for the development of such communities of speakers in the future.

<sup>19</sup> The Māori Quality Indicators Framework was developed by Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Māori in consultation with Māori Television and the Māori Radio Network (He Kaimahi Pukapuka Arataki, n.d.).

<sup>20</sup> The group appointed to review the 2003 Māori Television Service Act have also pointed out the importance of the ‘spirit’ of the language in judging that elusive thing, quality: “Even incorrect language can be an ‘appropriate form of expression’ – if its emotional construction is sound... ‘[Q]uality language’ to us all is that which we understand and which we feel suits the circumstances of the moment. It could in fact be assessed by asking us... the viewers” (Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 1, Issues 2). In practice, it is not feasible for viewers’ judgement to modify the language content of a programme, as by the time it is broadcast, it is too late to change much. However, over time, feedback from the public could certainly inform production language practices for the future.

<sup>21</sup> “Language and tikanga content may be built up from a combination of voice over, scripted and unscripted dialogue, interviews and cultural practises [sic] i.e. waiata, haka, karakia, karanga, pōwhiri, etc. These cultural elements will be dependent on the genre of the show and this will be determined in consultation with our Programme Commissioner(s)” (Māori Television, 2008).

<sup>22</sup> Up to 20% of all episodes in a series can be checked for reo. Manutai Schuster remarks that in practice the language assessment does not have to be a separate event, as the commissioners are also fluent speakers, and can judge reo and production values together (Schuster, interview 2010). Both channels say that when there is variance in quality and/ or quantity between the rough cut and the original plan, sequences or episodes may need to be recut or revoiced. There is rarely enough time or funding for material to be reshot (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008, Schuster, interview 2010).

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<sup>23</sup> Hita claims that “Māori Television is a new vehicle for language change, and people are accepting these changes rapidly. We need to be more conscious of how this growth and change affects the rest of the language” (Hita, 2008).

<sup>24</sup> As well as terms, of course, “television, as a social institution and powerful technology, creates new discourses, new modes of language use, new forms of translation, and new forms of communication between communities with different linguistic abilities. “Natural” and TV languages coexist in constant interaction, influencing each other and contributing to the dynamism of verbal communication” (Hassanpour, 1994).

<sup>25</sup> Seosamh Ó Murchú, project leader on the first stage of the monolingual Irish dictionary project, says: “TG4 and Radio na Gaeltachta have been cultivating a new discourse... I prefer the term ‘development’ rather than ‘preservation’, which makes the task seem like trying to capture something in time. I see the Irish language as something organic and living and thriving” (Ó Murchú, 2007, quoted in Corless, 2007).

<sup>26</sup> Pádraic Ó Ciardha would agree: “Is é nádúr gach teanga ná muna bhfuil tú ag forbairt, tá tú ag cúlú... An dualgas orainn ná an genius cruthaitheacht atá ins an teanga seo a chur in oiriúint don teilifís. B’fhéidir gur dona le daoine é seo – [ach] sin seandálaíocht. Is tábhachtaí liomsa an rud atá beo, atá cruthaitheach” [The nature of every language is that if you are not developing, you are falling behind... the obligation on us to make the creative genius of this language [Irish] suitable for the television. Maybe some people don’t like that – [but what they seem to want is] archaeology. To me, the most important thing is the thing that’s alive, and creative] (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007).

<sup>27</sup> – or as one that can be used for sexual intimacy. Ann Marie Hourihane’s *Sunday Tribune* review article expresses amazement at the very idea (2000: 3).

<sup>28</sup> There has been recognition of dialectal diversity along with iwi and cultural diversity since 2005 (Māori Television, 2005: 14), and the 2009 table of ‘key quality indicators for te reo Māori’ specifically mentions mita (Māori Television, 2009: 4-6),

<sup>29</sup> Whilst Raidió na Gaeltachta maintains dialectal specificity, many listeners have now become familiar with varieties of Irish from other parts of the country. Although they may not use those phrases themselves, they understand their meaning. This strengthens the language, as it means that people from different areas may speak freely to one another without recourse to English as a face-saving lingua franca.

<sup>30</sup> Although the preference is for “a wide variety of dialects [included in the animated shows] just as there is in everyday life” (Schuster, interview 2010), current publicity material for the station recognizes the lack of a comprehensive representation of mita. For example, publicity for *Ngā Pari Kārangaranga o te Motu* runs: “Made by iwi for iwi, viewers have **the rare opportunity** [my emphasis] to hear their own dialect and get an insight into iwi connections and knowledge” (Māori Television website, 2010).

<sup>31</sup> She says, “Is dócha go gcabhraíonn [an Béarlachas] le haisteoirí nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu ligint orthu féin go bhfuil siad líofa” [I suppose [the use of anglicisms] helps actors without much Irish to make believe that they are fluent] (Johnstone, e-mail 2010).

<sup>32</sup> It is not really that they were second class, but that they were not the primary concern of Raidió na Gaeltachta, whose service was directed at people who used Irish in everyday life.

<sup>33</sup> Siobhán Ní Laoire argues that thanks to TG4, a new sociolinguistic context has been created (both on set and behind the scenes) where non-fluent people use Irish with native speakers, and unlike the situation in school or real life encounters, neither party switches to English – the two groups are forced to understand and accommodate each other’s different speaking styles (Ní Laoire, 2008: 84).

<sup>34</sup> S4C of Wales is an interesting comparison in this regard. Welsh newscasters were encouraged to alter the language used in the scripts to a variety which resembled to a greater extent the ways in which they spoke normally. The reason was to make it sound more natural, and the effect was to increase the proportion of dialectal features used (Jones, 1998: 275)

<sup>35</sup> A child is likely to consider regional terms as synonyms “in the absence of societal monitoring, and use them interchangeably” (Jones, 1998: 280).

<sup>36</sup> Morgan explains the significance of the ‘source’ metaphor: “Taniwha Springs is a freshwater spring [near Rotorua], a place to revitalise your soul, your mind, and the source of water. The analogy I’m using is that of the language at its pure source. There is a river that leads to the lake. The spring is still clear, but the clarity as you get closer to the lake is not good. It’s stagnant, it’s pretty sick - not healthy. We need to return to the source, going up the stages of the river. Very much like the language” (Morgan, interview 2009).

<sup>37</sup> Hita sees Te Taura Whiri as having too strong an academic hand to enable a full regeneration of te reo across all registers and domains. He gives examples from the familial ‘register’: “If a person doesn’t know how to say ‘I have an itchy arse’ in a language they are supposed to be fluent in, well there is something wrong” (interview 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Māori Television also engages with the didactic function in its language-learning programmes, discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>39</sup> Hollings claims that “the existence of Māori language broadcasting legitimises Māori language in a sphere of modernity” (2005: 117). The same point is recognised in the context of European MLM by Cormack, who combines it with “a sense of community [and the] creation of an alternative public sphere” (2007: 53-5).

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<sup>40</sup> In their Statement of Intent, the Board of Te Māngai Pāho attributes the “positive shift” in NZ society’s attitude to Māori language and culture mainly to Māori broadcasting, particularly MTS (TMP, 2009: 4).

<sup>41</sup> “Mar sin, tógann an suíomh/timpeallacht nua (an tinteán nua) agus an modh cumarsáide breise, (i ndáiríre, an seanmhodh a cailleadh le céad bliain anuas) an oidhreacht agus acmhainn teanga (i bhfoirm oideachais agus foghlama) ar ais go dtí na pobail ar leo iad” [So the new site/environment (the new hearth) and the new method of communication (really it’s the old method which has been lost for a century) bring heritage and language resources (in the form of education and learning) back to the community where they belong] (Ó Conaire, 2010: 58).

<sup>42</sup> Māori Television also seeks to carry out a “specific measurement of [Māori Television’s] effectiveness in terms of language revitalisation” (Māori Television, SOI, 2009: 15).

<sup>43</sup> This fits with O’Connell’s writing on the work of television in reinforcing new vocabulary (2003: 60).

<sup>44</sup> “We used to have an audience that was 70% non-Māori and aged 50+” (Schuster, interview 2010).

“Some of the things that were rating quite well for us are quite old-fashioned... [and appealed to] the people who are feeling cast adrift by whizz-bang, slick commercial television” (Parr, interview 2007).

<sup>45</sup> The most direct statement TG4 has made in regard to language appears in their 2010 Statement of Public Service: “Irish is the working language of TG4 and while the organisation particularly welcomes contact and correspondence in Irish, it is happy to respond in English to any correspondence/contact initiated in that language” (TG4, 2010: 13). Most TG4 publications are bilingual, and their website is an excellent example of this. Nonetheless, their *5-year Working Strategy 2008-13* only exists in an English version so far. It should be noted that there is even less indigenous language presence in the publications of Māori Television, which reflects the position of the language in society at large. For example, the Māori Television Annual Report 2009 is all in English except for two pages in te reo which contain a summary of the reports of the CEO and Chairman.

<sup>46</sup> Current Head of Department Babe Kapa emphasises that the language is intended to be used in the workplace (interview 2010). This level of fluency might be achieved in a practical way. Eruera Morgan recalls that when commands on set are given in reo, non-speaking crew soon pick up the terminology for things like ‘turn over’ ‘roll’ ‘stop recording’. However, this is not done as a matter of course – only certain floor managers and directors make calls in te reo (Morgan, interview 2009).

<sup>47</sup> The tasks of the Te Reo Department include advising in-house production units on reo appropriate for programming, subtitling in-house programming, translation of official Māori Television documentation and quality assurance of reo content of commissioned programmes. The reo team also provides advice on matters of tikanga when required (Kapa, interview 2010).

<sup>48</sup> “None of the television or radio companies responsible for the programmes broadcast on the Welsh-medium channels were able to provide an official language policy [in relation to dialect or standard], although *Radio Cymru* has produced a set of recommendations for its news reporters. It would seem that instead of adhering to specific guidelines, the tendency is to play it ‘by ear’, with each producer forming his own idea of what he feels to be acceptable or not” (Jones, 1998: 273).

<sup>49</sup> It should be noted that RTÉ and its sub-services (RTÉ 1, the then Network 2 and Raidió na Gaeltachta) had not seen the need to develop a language strategy either. Writing in 2000, Ní Neachtain remarks on “strong evidence of a *laissez faire*, freewheeling attitude to language practices within all [RTÉ] services”, and cites Cathal Póirtéir (producer in charge of Irish language programmes in RTÉ Radio 1) as saying that it is “very hard to see any language planning in practice within the station” (Ní Neachtain, 2000: 157).

<sup>50</sup> Ó Gallchóir (interview 2008) recognises that some people have a problem with this formulation, but insists that the language be free of the didacticism with which it was long associated in the minds of the public. “Ní hé seo an scoil. Is stáisiún teilifíse é. Tá aidhmeanna éagsúla againn” [This isn’t school. It’s a television station. We have different aims.]. As Ó Ciardha (interview 2007) points out, “Níl insititiúd pleanála teanga againn. Níl aon duine freagrach as an treo. Tá ag éirí linn ár rud fhéin a dhéanamh” [This is not a language planning institute. Nobody is responsible for the direction [of language use]. We’re getting on with doing our own thing].

<sup>51</sup> There are currently moves in both Ireland and New Zealand to deal with the shortage, including workshops and third level courses (Te Taura Whiri, n.d.; Gaelchultúr, n.d.).

<sup>52</sup> Cronin, for example, mentions that it may take “up to 40 hours to dub a one-hour programme” (1996: 195), and Smallman (interview 2010) notes that 15 hours is a reasonable time to subtitle a half-hour programme.

<sup>53</sup> It is important to mention the TG4 version of *The Muppet Show* here as an example of exceptionally intelligent translation. (One of the translators for this show was the poet Gabriel Rosenstock.) Layered word play peculiar to Irish is made strangely salient when spoken by Kermit and other American characters already well known to Irish audiences. The Muppets speak Irish and their celebrity guests speak English, offering a nuanced macaronic interplay to the viewer.

<sup>54</sup> Another factor is that translation of word play from one language to another is notoriously difficult, especially when the joke relies in part on visuals. Screen translators also need to match syllable count and length of phrase, so that the animated characters appear to be speaking the new language.

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<sup>55</sup> ‘Revoicing’ is Luyken’s term, and refers to voice-over, narration, free commentary and lip-sync dubbing (Luyken, 1991: 71).

<sup>56</sup> *Te Kāea* on Māori Television is broadcast first (as live) in te reo without subtitles, and a repeat with English subtitles is shown later in the night.

In the Scottish context, the multilingual current affairs programme *Eòrpa* commonly uses a Gàidhlig voice-over for continental European languages (Murray, interview 2008; Esslemont, e-mail 2010).

<sup>57</sup> Ó Meallaigh comments that many large broadcasters also dub acquired English-language programming into a local-accented English to increase the audience appeal (Ó Meallaigh, e-mail 2010).

<sup>58</sup> Exceptions to this trend were the well-received dubbing into Irish for TG4 of *The Scooby Doo Movie* and *Harry Potter agus an Seomra Diamhar/ and the Chamber of Secrets* in the 2000s, which were carried out by Telegael. The majority of Telegael’s dubbing work (chosen by TG4) is translated from English, e.g. *The Corpse Bride* (Christmas 2008), *Elmo* and *Sesame Street*.

<sup>59</sup> The tendency in northern Europe is to subtitle (Scandinavia) and in southern Europe to re-voice (France, Italy). Subtitles are a rarity on New Zealand ‘mainstream’ television, except on programmes for the Deaf, despite the presence in the country of large communities of people who speak other languages.

<sup>60</sup> Cronin has commented on the distracting quality of subtitles for fluent speakers (Cronin, 1996: 196). Māori speakers agree, claiming that the *ahua* [form] of the *kōrero* is lost, and that subtitles “detract from the story” (Berryman, interview 2007). Ó Ciardha of TG4 mentions fluent speakers who have created a ‘chastity belt’ for their television sets (a strip of cardboard across the bottom of the screen to block the subtitles). However, he believes that although fluent speakers may feel irritation towards subtitles, they are generally willing to put up with them for the sake of including other viewers out of: “*carthanacht agus tuiscint ar riachtanais agus mianta an phobail eile*” [charity and understanding of the needs and wishes of the other community] (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007).

<sup>61</sup> The situation is similar for Māori language programmes. If a production has more than 30% of te reo content, it is automatically considered for subtitling (Morgan, 2007).

<sup>62</sup> The Broadcasting Association of Ireland [BAI] Access Rules are “intended to improve the understanding and enjoyment of television programming by those who are deaf or hard of hearing. While they may also function as a translation service (in the case of English speaking viewers watching Irish language programmes or foreign nationals watching English language programmes) this is not the statutory purpose of the rules in place. As such, there is no recommendation to provide subtitling in other languages” (McLaughlin, e-mail 2010). More details are available online (BCI, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> *Ros na Rún* is currently (March 2010) the only programme for adults with closed subtitles in both Irish and English (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008).

<sup>64</sup> Anecdotes about bizarre subtitling abound in both countries. For example, on the arts discussion show for TG4 *Soiscéal Pháraic* (Loopline Film), the musical instrument bouzouki was rendered in the subtitles as ‘bazooka’ (2004). Quinton Hita recalls the strange twist on his advice to contestants on a debating show on Māori Television “*Heoi anō tā mātou, he hoatu i te ropi – kei a koutou ā kō atu*” [We’ve given you the rope, now it’s up to you to decide what to do with it], where the Ngāpuhi word *ropi* [rope] was translated as ‘soap’ (2010).

<sup>65</sup> The exception is that the live subtitling for *Te Kāea* is done by the news team, not the subtitling department.

<sup>66</sup> The current team of four (three in Auckland and one in Wellington) represent Ngāpuhi (with a link to Tūhoe), Tauranga (with a link to Ngāpuhi), Taranaki (with a link to Tūhoe) and Ngāti Porou (Kapa, interview 2010).

<sup>67</sup> A few commissioned series have already been subtitled by their producers (e.g. *Kowhāo Rau* (Kura Productions, 2010)). However, such a development across the board would be “significantly more expensive on a per hour basis” (Parr, e-mail 2010) and would depend on TMP providing extra funding to producers to carry out this work.

<sup>68</sup> “Our funding targets are now set at a ratio of 40:40:20 across the Fluent, Second Language Learners and Receptive target audiences. The ratio was previously 25:30:45” (TMP, 2009: 6-7).

<sup>69</sup> Larry Parr was in favour of continuing such a practice, but was outvoted by the rest of the Programming Team (Parr, interview 2007).

<sup>70</sup> However, “Ideally TG4 would have subtitles available in both English and Irish which could then help the younger generation who are attempting to improve their command of Irish” (Ó Meallaigh, e-mail 2010). As Ó Ciardha (e-mail 2010) also points out, “*ní leor aon soláthar fotheidil d’aon seirbhís teilifíse i sochaf dátheangach go dtí go mbíonn fotheidil sa dá theanga ar fáil ar an aschur ar fad atá dírithe ar an don lucht féachana fásta*” [No television subtitling provision in a bilingual society can be deemed sufficient until subtitles in both languages are available for all adult audiences].

<sup>71</sup> Fiontar’s research study on how to approach the national language *Plean 2028* also considers Irish language subtitles to be useful: “TG4 should be further supported to provide television services through Irish. Subtitling options should be substantially increased in order to offer the option to have subtitles in Irish and

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English, thus significantly reinforcing the accessibility of TG4 to learners and non-proficient users of Irish” (Fiontar, 2009: 31).

<sup>72</sup> However, Babe Kapa has indicated that there may be future discussions with the kaumātua group about subtitling in te reo for the Deaf (Kapa, interview 2010).

<sup>73</sup> “Déanfar an Clár a scannánú nó a fhís-scannánú agus a thaifeadadh i nGaeilge ar choinníoll go bhféadfaidh gnéithe a bheith sa Chlár nach bhfuil i nGaeilge i gcás inar gá sin mar gheall ar chritéir chruthaitheachta an Chláir (TG4, 1995: 9, section 14.4)./ The Programme shall be filmed or videotaped and recorded in the Irish language provided that the Programme may contain elements which are not in the Irish language where the creative criteria of the Programme reasonably so determine (TG4, 1995: 8, section 14.4).

<sup>74</sup> In the guidelines for coverage of the 2010 Oireachtas, it is mentioned that Irish should be the language of production (“Bíodh sé san áireamh gur í an Ghaeilge teanga na léirithe seo”) [www.tg4.ie/corp/tair.asp](http://www.tg4.ie/corp/tair.asp) (accessed 8.6.2010).

<sup>75</sup> As Pádhraic Ó Ciardha (interview 2007) notes, “Don chéad uair anois feicimse daoine óga atá ag iarraidh obair san earnáil teilifíse a chreideann gur buntáiste iontach an Ghaeilge a bheith agat... Is rud iontach é sin don Ghaeilge, [go bhfuil] deiseanna fostaíochta agat, deiseanna taistil...” [For the first time now I see young people who want to work in the television industry who believe that speaking Irish is a great advantage.. This is a great thing for the Irish language [that] it provides opportunities for employment and travel...].

<sup>76</sup> In the 2009 Annual Report, it is written that the staff are “more than two-thirds Māori” (Māori Television, 2009: 42), but not all of these people are fluent speakers of te reo.

<sup>77</sup> In his role as General Manager for Reo and Tikanga, Joe Te Rito advocated that both internal and external programme makers employ “highly fluent or native speakers of the language to ensure quality assurance of Maori language use” (Te Rito, e-mail 2010), but because the Board at that time was made up largely of non-Māori-speakers, it was difficult for them to appreciate the need for such measures. This is comparable to the situation in RTÉ in the 1970s and 1980s, as discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>78</sup> All staff should “be aware of and understand all Māori values. From the whakapapa of the business we are in – through to the mana of what we do to uphold the mauri of the people” (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 4).

<sup>79</sup> The shortage of trained technical staff and actors is a very real challenge to smaller television stations and production companies (Higgins, 2001; Mane, 2009: 188-90; Māori Television Statement of Intent, 2005-6: 15; Māori Television Statement of Intent, 2006-7: 17).

<sup>80</sup> “There are 35 people working on *Te Kāea* now, whereas at the beginning, there was only half that team, and it took them a whole day’s work to put the news together. Only one of the ten had experience” (Nathan, interview 2008).

<sup>81</sup> This is similar to the practice at Māori Television, where some productions do not need a consultant, if producers or directors have the fluency to carry out the role themselves (Schuster, interview 2010).

<sup>82</sup> Johnstone cites examples from recent TG4 drama productions: “*Aifric* mar shampla, bhí Gaeilge ag 99% den gcrú agus 100% de na haisteoirí. *An Crisis*: 20% den gcrú. *Rásaí*: 10% den gcrú [on *Aifric* for example, 99% of the crew and 100% of the actors had Irish. On *An Crisis*, it was 20% of the crew, and on *Rásaí na Gaillimhe* about 10% of the crew] (Johnstone, e-mail 2010).

<sup>83</sup> Although initially crews may find the protocol or translation procedures temporarily inconvenient, the resulting cultural awareness often leads to greater pride in the work itself. For example, the bilingual short film *Te Whare* (Green, 2008) was conceived with respect for tikanga, and each day’s work began with a karakia. However, the language remained a source of embarrassment for the director, who jokingly called ‘tak-eh one’, until the script supervisor and clapper-loader changed the slate to read ‘haerenga tuatahi’ [Take 1].

<sup>84</sup> The funding body also requires producers to submit a Māori language plan with programme proposals since July 2007 (TMP website). Māori Television want to “ensure that programme, creative process and production are imbued with reo and Māori perspectives” (Māori Television, 2005: 17). The need for consultants in achieving this goal has also been noted by Ngā Aho Whakaari (2008: 15).

<sup>85</sup> Two such consultants work in the Te Reo Department of Māori Television, and may provide transcripts or advice for internal productions with which they are not otherwise involved (Kapa, interview 2010).

<sup>86</sup> The duties of a language advisor are wide-ranging, from script consultation to dialogue-coaching to ADR and editing supervision (McDonald, interview 2006). Sometimes, the reo consultant is expected to carry out a feat beyond his or her experience. Remember that reo consultants are “translators, not language planners or experts in the revitalisation of language” (Edwards, 2009).

<sup>87</sup> TG4 Feidhmeannach Taighde/ Research Executive Dave Moore (one of the few at the station who neither comes from an Irish-speaking family nor studied the language at school), comments on the “huge amount of encouragement” from his colleagues in learning Irish (Moore, interview 2008).

<sup>88</sup> The goal of the strategy is threefold: 1 to construct an effective Māori language development plan for staff, 2 to ensure that a vibrant and professional modern Māori culture pervades the channel’s staff and its activities and to 3 devise and apply a Māori language plan with clearly appropriate language quality and quantity standards for on-air programmes. The second part of the goal referring to tikanga marks a distinct

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point of difference between the visions of Māori Television and TG4, and will be more fully discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>89</sup> A wānanga was held at Māori Television headquarters on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September 2009, with linguistic experts, reporters, producers and kaumātua, who discussed the relation of language to television broadcasting. At this meeting it was decided that a strategy was necessary. Māori television consulted with staff, kaumātua and stakeholders such as Ngā Aho Whakaari and Te Māngai Pāho, on the “prescriptive” rautaki (Mather, 2009). Wena Harawira and Pita Turei pointed out how “vital” it is to get input from grassroots (Turei, 2009; Harawira, 2009). An internal and an external group were formed (the latter made up of people with a professional background of language), and two hui were held as part of this process of consultation – the first to figure out, and the second to review and clarify the purpose in specific areas (Edwards & Stephens, 2009). At the third hui (November 2009) the draft rautaki was presented to stakeholders: Te Puni Kōkiri, Te Taura Whiri, Ngā Aho Whakaari, kaumātua and staff (Kapa, interview 2010).

<sup>90</sup> “Note to Applicants: Briefly indicate how the chosen Māori language content will be sustained in the production, in terms of the identified language capability of production staff and talent” (TMP, 2008).

<sup>91</sup> Although fluency is not a prerequisite for employment at Māori Television, “[i]t is important, however, that you are committed to learning, using and fostering te reo Māori” (Māori Television website, 2010).

<sup>92</sup> The News and Current Affairs Department requires fluent te reo speakers for *Te Kāea*. In other departments it varies. According to Eruera Morgan, 12 of the 17 people in the Te Reo channel are bilingual (at various levels of fluency) (Morgan, interview 2009).

<sup>93</sup> Charles Berryman (Ngāti Awa), former General Manager Reo and Tikanga (2007-2010) at Māori Television, designed language courses for people who had no background in te reo. Whilst there is a general willingness to learn and improve, the biggest problem with some staff is the bane of the adult language-learner: a lack of sustained motivation, or what Berryman jokingly refers to as “mangere-itis” (Berryman, interview 2007). Morgan and Kapa also emphasise that the journey towards language proficiency has to come from the staff themselves (Morgan, interview 2009; Kapa, interview 2010).

<sup>94</sup> Irial Mac Murchú, Managing Director of Nemeton, is proud that Irish is used at all levels of the Gaeltacht-based company: in production, for technical matters, and in the boardroom (Mac Murchú, 2008: 157).

<sup>95</sup> For a discussion of the genres featured on Māori Television and TG4, see Chapter 5.

<sup>96</sup> Jo Mane cites the example of popular Māori Television presenter Julian Wilcox (who also continues to present a daily morning radio show on Radio Waatea), who was mentored and nurtured in Wellington radio (2009: 116-7). The current Ardstiúrthóir/ Director General of TG4, Pól Ó Gallchóir, was previously head of Radió na Gaeltachta.

<sup>97</sup> Réalt, an organization of 17 Gaeltacht-based companies negotiating with TnaG in the 1990s, accepted lesser terms than those offered by RTÉ for fear that the television service would not go ahead (Mac Eachmharcaigh, 2008: 162).

<sup>98</sup> Since the television stations began, external training courses have been growing in various third level institutions (Waterford Institute of Technology, NUI Galway, Dublin City University (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008) Auckland University of Technology (Paul, 2005: 46)).

<sup>99</sup> The *Síol* (run by TG4, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Gréasán na Meán/ Skillnet and the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland (BCI)) and *Údar* (run by TG4 and the ILBF) initiatives encouraged new writing. *Údar* focused on screen adaptations of Irish language literature, and *Síol* developed six half-hour scripts by six new writers which were screened on TG4 in 2010.

<sup>100</sup> She also notes that this is good for the broadcaster in terms of audience: “má thagann scéalta ó na daoine iad féin baineann siad níos mó sásamh as agus cuireann siad níos mó spéise ann” [If the stories come from the people themselves, they enjoy them more, and are more interested in them] (Ní Chonláin, interview 2008).

<sup>101</sup> Hita remarks: “If going down the road of local development, you have to lower your [initial] expectations because there is a longer learning curve. We need to take a long-term view. The slower way is preferable, but people don’t want to take that risk” (Hita, interview 2010).

<sup>102</sup> Hita reflects on the experience at Kura Productions: “The first two to three months were really difficult, as people were getting tired. It’s tiring to speak a different language all the time if you are not used to it. You have to keep thinking of words and structures. Finding words and phrases to describe the things people do in an office. Even a native speaker did not have the words, for example filing cabinet” (Hita, interview 2010).

<sup>103</sup> Ó Raighne recalls the gradual recognition of the TG4 schedule by *The Irish Times* and *The Examiner* - and that it took *The Irish Independent* around a decade (Ó Raighne, interview 2008). Mather is concerned at the lack of information printed about the Māori Television schedule “We have asked them to put in English descriptions of what the programmes are about... We have actually considered the option of coming to some commercial agreement and paying for more space...” (Mather, interview 2007).

As well as this, cable operators were initially unwilling to accord Teilifís na Gaeilge a lower number and a higher status in their station lists (Higgins, interview 2001; Goan, 2006: 111).

<sup>104</sup> Ó Meallaigh takes the existing reviews as an encouraging sign, particularly as some programmes have not been extensively publicised due to budgetary constraints (Ó Meallaigh, interview 2008). “Tá poiblíocht

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tábhachtach leis na scéalta seo a chur i mbéal an phobail. Tá ganntanas acmhainní ag TG4 le seo a chur i gcrích. ‘Sé jab an léiritheora freisin ná an scéal a bhrú agus a chur os comhair an phobal - is leosan an scéal ach go minic ceal ama agus daoine agus tuirse ní dhéantar é” [Publicity is important in promoting and informing people of the programmes that are available at a particular time. There is a lack of resources in TG4. The producer’s role is vital in publicising their story as they are the closest to it. They know it intimately. However, due to tiredness, lack of time and manpower, it is not followed through]. (Ní Chonláin, interview 2008).

<sup>105</sup> “Is é ceann de na rudaí is suntasaí faoi *The Running Mate* ná gur sheas sé amach dó féin mar shraith theilifíse amháin gan an lipéad shraith theilifíse *Gaeilge* tugtha air... ba iontach é a fheiceáil gur pléadh leis mar a phléifeadh le haon sraith theilifíse, scannán nó dráma eile in Éirinn nó ón tír eile” [One of the most notable things about *The Running Mate* was that it stood out as a television series in its own right, without the label of Irish-language television series... It was great to see it discussed as any tv series, film or other drama would be, from Ireland or anywhere else] (Quinn, 2009: 8).

<sup>106</sup> “An mhisneach, an spiorad, an meon sin.. [Tá] furmhór na daoine [anseo] cruthaitheach, [agus mar sin tá TG4] níos suimiúla mar áit oibre [that courage, that spirit, that mindset.. most people [here are] creative [and so TG4 is] more interesting as a workplace] (Ó Raighne, interview 2008).

Tainui Stephens comments that there is a different spirit in Māori Television than in TVNZ (Stephens, quoted in Mane, 2009: 142).

## CHAPTER 5

### PRODUCTION AND IMAGE ON TG4 AND MĀORI TELEVISION

*Tá sibhse ag obair i dteanga mionlaigh a bhfuil cáil na cruthaitheachta uirthi – Tá muid ag súil go rachaidh sibh sa tseans le rudaí [You're working in a minority language that is renowned for its creativity - we're hoping that you'll take risks with things]. (Ó Ciardha, interview 2007)*

The difference between indigenous minority language television broadcasters and other national media outlets is potentially realised in three areas – the structure and purpose of the broadcaster (discussed in Chapters 2 and 3), the approach to production, and the content shown. This chapter will investigate the last two points through an overview of the growing presence of tikanga Māori [Māori cultural values and practices] in the New Zealand screen industry, and an analysis of programming on Māori Television and TG4 in terms of language image and twisting conventional genres.

Establishing a television station is not to start from scratch, but rather to step into a stream that has been flowing for some time. Media conventions derived from larger language communities impose not only a certain model of practice, but also tend to promote international formats. These models of broadcasting can influence indigenous work (Browne, 1996: 11), causing over-reliance on pre-existing genres and formats which is at times to the detriment of indigenous screen culture (Cormack, 2007: 56-7). Writers on minority language media recognise the usefulness of such approaches, but do not want to see them become the only model. As Colm Ó Tórna puts it, the indigenous broadcaster has more to offer:

Cláracha a thugann le fios go bhfuil 'súil eile' ar an saol atá cuid mhaith ceilte ar phobal an Bhéarla. [Programmes which show a 'different perspective' on the world that is to a great extent hidden from the English-language community] (Ó Tórna, 2002)

Indeed, Seosamh Mac Donnacha believes that part of the purpose of TG4 is to create a space for the performance of local voices “laistigh de théarmaí tagartha agus na slata tomhais atá acusan mar phobal” [within the reference points and measuring standards of the community themselves] (2008: 111). Pól Ó Gallchóir of TG4 expressly states that the channel is always striving for alternative perspectives (interview 2008)<sup>1</sup>. TG4 and Māori Television are well aware of the danger of matching existing programmes instead of creating alternatives, and several people mentioned in interviews that they were concerned not to produce an Irish or Māori-language version of RTÉ or TVNZ fare<sup>2</sup>. Barry Barclay reflects on the dilemma in broader terms: “Our Indigenous tales are coming to the screen in hand-me-down styles. How on earth do we crack this? The rethinking might take a decade, it might take a generation – but at least we are making a start” (Barclay, 2006). The ‘start’ Barclay refers to involves his philosophy of film-making, which will be discussed in the first section. Taking tradition as a starting point, an indigenous approach to television production can be quite distinct from conventional processes.



Certainly, tradition is central to the way both channels brand themselves (Lysaght, 2009). Seán Cathal Ó Coileáin, Stiúrthóir Cruthaitheach & Branda/ Creative Director at TG4, remarks on the rich resource afforded by old traditions to the design process:

Tá seanchas nó dúchas na tíre mar tobar dúinne mar designers. Tá sé iontach tábhachtach go bhfuil tobar dá leithéid againn. [The old stories and heritage of the country are like a well for us as designers. It is extremely important that we have such a pool to draw from] (interview 2008)

In the New Zealand context, cultural ‘authenticity’ or continuity is constantly coupled with an insistence on modernity.

bound together by mobile phones/ we kōrero our brown words/ through fibre-optic, satellite networks/ of tukutuku DNA... the taiaha of new technologies/ used skilfully in brown hands. (Cruikshank, 2003)

In Ireland, there is less of a sense of wonder that an ancient language can be used with modern technology in contemporary settings - but this depends very much on the language experience of the viewer (Uí Chollatáin, e-mail 2008). Apart from the “graphic ephemera” (Connolly, 2000) used in branding the channel, the image of the minority language on television comes to us through its use in different programme genres.

As television is a generic medium, attention must be paid to the use of genre as it interacts with production practice. There are three ways for indigenous broadcasters to engage with genre as a structuring device for programme content. The first is simply to use what is already there, making few modifications. The second is to ‘translate’ or ‘twist’ existing genres to achieve a new hybrid genre with strong self-awareness and cultural visibility. The third way of dealing with genre is to disregard existing models in favour of an ‘authentic’ indigenous approach. In the analysis section of this chapter, three types of engagement with genre will be examined: a conventional television genre inflected by the use of the indigenous language on screen and on set (*Aifric*, Telegael for TG4), a hybrid genre created in order to promote the learning of the indigenous language (*Kōrero Mai*, Cinco Cine for Māori Television), and a new ‘genre’ in which tradition dictates the form of the programme (*Abair Amhráin*, Forefront for TG4 and *Mōteatea*, Raukatauri for Māori Television).

## 1 Issues of Representation

*daoine amuigh ag breathnú isteach orainn, agus ní muidne ag breathnú amach* [people on the outside looking in at us, and not us looking out] (Ó Cofaigh, interview 2001)

Authenticity is a troublesome word. It evokes essentialist notions of what is ‘real’ or of value, often construed as being in opposition to modernity, and which in the post-colonial context continue to be imposed on people and culture<sup>3</sup>. Many writers in the post-colonial and indigenous fields have commented on the way that excolonisers retain ideological power over the culture of the colonised, in ‘freezing’ an image of how it is (Lloyd, 1999: 43; Maxwell, 2009). Linda Tuhiwai Smith refutes such a linking of indigeneity to changelessness, citing as wrong the colonisers’ “belief that

indigenous cultures cannot change, cannot recreate themselves and still claim to be indigenous. Nor can they be complicated, internally diverse or contradictory” (Smith, 1999: 74). In fact, change is evidence of life (McIntosh, 2007)<sup>4</sup>. Sissons explicitly separates tradition from indigeneity, and argues that “oppressive authenticity” (Sissons, 2005: 39) acts to cause a split between rural-based and urban-based groups. Marcia Langton, writing in Australia, also highlights the “racist assumption that there is “a ‘right’ way to be an Aboriginal, and [that] any Aboriginal film or video producer will necessarily make a ‘true’ representations of ‘Aboriginality’” (Langton, 1993: 27). Colin Graham sees various forms of “old, new and ironic authenticities” used by the coloniser to control the colonised, even at the post-colonial stage (Graham, 2001: 134). Sometimes these outsider representations, in the absence of a native production tradition, are internalised and reproduced by the people themselves (Alia & Bull, 2005).

The indigenous broadcaster works in a mediascape dominated by external images of the culture and language. After decades of American and British interpretations on screen, Māori and Gaeltacht audiences were accustomed to not seeing ‘themselves’, being to all intents and purposes invisible in primetime television entertainment until the arrival of Māori Television and TG4. Cultures and traditions long deprived of televisual representation risk losing their place in the life of the people. The independent producer Ciarán Ó Cofaigh remarks on the surge of pride that ensued as the Irish language television service began:

le teacht TG4 bhí sé soiléir go raibh cultúr ann, go raibh cultúr beo ann, cultúr comhaimseartha [ach] bhí traidisiún chomh maith ar ndóigh. [with the coming of TG4 it was clear that there was a culture there, that there was a living culture there, a contemporary culture [but] there was a tradition too of course] (Ó Cofaigh, in Quinn, 2009: 14).

Such a shift in perception - from being the object of a majority gaze to the more autonomous “muide ag breathnú amach” [us looking outwards] (Ó Cofaigh, interview 2001) - leads to changes in representation.

As the indigenous language group has been minoritised, however, any creative production must bear the weight of being a rounded representation for majority (and indigenous) eyes<sup>5</sup>. Máirín Nic Eoin points out that this occurs regardless of the intentions of the artist:

Dá ndeoin nó dá n-ainneoin, is mar urlabhraithe thar ceann pobail imeallaithe a labhraíonn na scríbhneoirí go minic, agus is mar ráitis ealaíne ó pheirspictíocht na suibhachta imeallaithe is gá saothair áirithe sá gcuid a léamh. [whether they want to or not, writers often speak on behalf of a marginalised community, and their work must be read as an artistic statement from the subjective perspective of the marginalised] (Nic Eoin, 2005:45)

Whilst “cultural flattening” (Shohat & Stam, 1995) was an inevitable feature of previous national television stations in Ireland and New Zealand, one expectation which native (and perhaps majority) audiences have of TG4 and Māori Television is that these stations will reverse the negative images. However, this also constitutes a burden, if TG4 is taken to represent the Irish speaking public, and Māori Television the Māori perspective - as if such things were monolithic and

not internally diverse. Merata Mita writes of the “burden of having to correct the past” carried by Māori film-makers (Mita, 1996:49).

Some, however, view this ‘burden’ as an opportunity. Eruera Morgan, Tumuaki Whakaaturanga/ Head of Programming for Te Reo channel, speaks of new projects involving material from the New Zealand Film Archives, where instead of showing decontextualised short clips in the style of other broadcasters, Māori Television intends to reveal “the story behind the film makers’ vision, the people of the day... peeling back the layers of the story, and going to the source of what exists” (Morgan, interview 2009). Barry Barclay writes that Māori film-makers must, as privilege and as duty, engage with the *kaitiakitanga* [spiritual guardianship] of their subject and material (Barclay, 2005: 123). Artist Lisa Reihana also focuses on the possibilities afforded to storytellers by the screen in terms of both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ audiences:

This medium has an important role to play in teaching people ways to perceive our culture. Māori filmmakers accept this responsibility as part of their *kaupapa*; and are constantly pushing boundaries, ideas and ways of seeing ourselves, not only with Pākehā but also with other Māori. (Reihana, 1993: 83)

The drive here is to demonstrate the diversity within the group. TG4 has similarly opened up Irish language culture to a wider audience, wresting the controls away from the ‘*ar son na cúise*’ or ‘*cairde na Gaeilge*’ brigade in favour of a broader range<sup>6</sup>.

Considering language and culture in terms of ‘authenticity’ is prone to curtail the imaginative freedom necessary for their continued life and evolution. UNESCO, in Point 8 of the *Yamato Declaration on Integrated Approaches for Safeguarding Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage*, notes that because intangible cultural heritage (such as language) is constantly recreated, “the term ‘authenticity’ as applied to tangible cultural heritage is not relevant when identifying and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage” (Yamato Declaration, 2004). However, authenticity may also be seen in non-restrictive terms. Michael D. Higgins reflects on the lack of engagement between contemporary society and the ‘authentic’ or the spiritually real, noting that it is as much a case of openness and imagination as it is of awareness of tradition, including “what is authentic from the past, what is authentic in relation to the envisioned future. It raises issues of the prophetic, issues of the utopian, issues of the as yet unimagined future” (Higgins, interview 2001). In this way, authenticity should be seen not as a set of prescriptive parameters, but rather as a function of the spirit or the imagination, intention realised through reflective practice.

Indeed, perhaps the search for authenticity has been carried out in the wrong place. What appears on screen may not be a true reflection of how the programme was conceived and put together. There can be an “authenticity” in the process, which is not necessarily obvious in the product. Although obviously broadcasters must promote high production values, it should not be at the

expense of the resonance of the content, to which audiences will have a more visceral reaction. This dilemma is no less urgent for being perceptible only to some.

## 1.1 How to tell a story

This world, the world of the imagination, is not a world in which we escape from reality, but one by means of which we engage reality on terms that reflect our own meanings and values. If our words and our several modes of imaginative representation are replaced by others that are not the reflection of our hearts and minds and experiences and the heritage of our people, then so is our sense of reality. This is the central insight of post-colonial theory, and it is why the 'peopleing [sic] and placing' of that imaginative world by others are so dangerous, for they alienate us from ourselves and from our home... especially when, as is so often the case, we still live there. (Chamberlain, 2000: 127)

Accuracy and good faith are vital to telling stories or representing people and communities who have not been well-served by the broadcast media in the past: "As a Māori creative, you represent your community, your hapu and your iwi – if you don't get it right, they will tell you" (Akuhata-Brown, 2007). Although Shaun Brown, Managing Director of SBS Australia, believes that the "biggest issue is not who tells the story, but that the story be told" (Brown, 2008)<sup>7</sup>, it is vital to remember that the story does not exist independently of its teller. Henry comments that in anthropology, a decision must be made as to whether to tell a story *about* people, or to use external skills to enable a story to be told *from* a people (Henry, 2007)<sup>8</sup>. Charles Berryman notes that

[o]nly [indigenous peoples] can tell their stories the way they want to tell their story or the way they want to show their story... When [other broadcasters] try and do it, very rarely will they succeed. Despite the fact they might have a Māori producer, there'll be strings attached there. Or you tell it the way they want to see it told. (Berryman, interview 2007)

The best teller of a story, according to Amohaere Houkamau, needs "an understanding of someone who has lived in that culture and understands how to portray it" (Houkamau, 2008)<sup>9</sup>.

The 'bardic' function of the television is an idea put forward by Fiske and Hartley (2004), who use the term to emphasise that television is an oral medium, central to the cultural world of its audience, as it appeals to their 'myths' and uses communication conventions with which they are familiar. Of course, television can never take the place of a real bard, as a living and respected expert in the communication and interpretation of culture, but it seems to attempt to fill that role. The role of the seanchaí or the tohunga is beyond the capacities of television:

It doesn't matter what you do, television is limited. How can a television communicate the wairua, the warmth, the mahana, the ihi, the pride of a person...? It can't. So the next best thing is to rely on the skill and the experience of the producer... the way they actually capture [the atmosphere] as the person is telling the story. (Berryman, interview 2007)

If television cannot fully take on the power and effect of the human storyteller, it does share some functions: conveying myth and belief, passing on cultural and social knowledge, explaining ourselves to ourselves. In the attempt to reach a wide audience, however, the intimacy of the telling may be lost.

All television stations face this dilemma, but for indigenous broadcasters it is heightened. As stories are moved from their original environment of physical, cultural and linguistic proximity into the television medium, it is necessary for storytellers (or producers) to deliberately consider how best such proximity and intimacy might be translated to the screen. Instead of a de facto authenticity based on a shared setting, there is now a planned foregrounding of certain components. As well as this, there are challenges specific to minoritised language/culture media. Some stories have not been publicly shown before, and so an onscreen version may be taken to represent all versions (premature judgement). There are issues over who has the right to tell and present certain stories, and how they are told (Barclay, 1990, 2005). It is necessary to have permission from people to use their stories - a story does not belong to the listener<sup>10</sup>. In the absence of a strong technical and ethical training framework, it is likely that justice will not be done to some stories. When the 'nation' is watching, the story might be categorised or appropriated, pinned into the form it has taken in this screen incarnation to the exclusion of other possibilities.

However, the medium of television also carries enormous potential benefits for the exploration and sharing of stories which may previously have been restricted to their immediate actors. Dermot Somers, Irish explorer and producer, speaks of situations where cultures are under threat, and people have a need to tell a story: "It's very political. They want a TV crew to come and relay their story to the world. The need of those people to tell a story is greater than the story per se" (2003)<sup>11</sup>. Barry Barclay also figures the role of the producer as facilitator for other people's stories: "we are but carvers, commissioned to carve the house... it's not our story" (2007). When a story is sensitively conveyed, it becomes "an emblem of aroha [love, regard] for one another" (Barclay, 2007)<sup>12</sup>. Somers speaks of meeting gifted storytellers who incite in the programme-maker a sort of "exaltation, exhilaration with language; like music, it bubbles in your head like champagne" (2003). In this way, the script is actually a "journey" rather than a map (2003), as it respects the integrity of the people about whom the programme revolves. This approach is particularly important in oral cultures, where the "depth and layers of stories... have not been well documented [on film or in print]" (Morgan, interview 2009). The programme-maker has great responsibility to bring out the story and to respect its guardians. Focusing on the acts of communicating and connecting as opposed to broadcasting, Eruera Morgan sees onscreen storytelling as a way to "build the self-esteem of a population" (Morgan, interview 2009)<sup>13</sup>. Indeed, in the early productions shown on *Teilifís na Gaeilge*, native speakers delighted in the 'true' representation of norms and values. Muiris Mac Conghaíl reviewed the comedy series *CU Burn* as "teacht i dtír ar an scéalaíocht... Bhí orainn fanacht le teacht TnaG de síoda den tsórt seo a tharraingt as mála an tsnátha ghil" [a coming home of storytelling... We had to wait for the arrival of TnaG for silk of this kind to be pulled from the bag of bright threads] (Mac Conghaíl, 1997).

To tell a proper story, the right language and the right approach are needed. Whilst ideally the two are linked, there is now a generation who can speak the indigenous minority language without necessarily knowing the inherent culture (Ó Mianáin, 2008: 44). The issue of cultural difference is much less salient in Irish-language productions than it is in the Māori domain, where there is a strong tradition of kaitiakitanga, and there are moves to formalise cultural protocol as well as language in the context of television production. Kaupapa Māori theory is a framework for analysing and understanding phenomena, but it is also a way of life. In its most general terms, Kaupapa Māori is a philosophical foundation, or a 'place to stand'. According to Smith, it is "a different epistemological tradition that frames the way we see the world, the way we organise ourselves in it, the questions we ask, and the solutions we seek" (Smith, 1999: 230)<sup>14</sup>. Although such an alternative viewpoint is not articulated in the Irish language situation, there are some similarities in terms of respect for people and places. In brief, the purpose of the broadcast (e.g. educational, archival, entertainment, profit) and intentions of the film-maker (e.g. self-seeking, community-serving) are as important as the final televisual product, and may override or reorganise conventional television formats or genres.

Special events coverage on Māori Television provides interesting examples of the clash between tikanga Māori and television conventions. Babe Kapa, General Manager for Reo and Tikanga, reflects on such an occasion, where during the ANZAC Day coverage, a karanga was interrupted by the floor manager for technical reasons: "To me, that's 'tikanga for television'. The value of that act has now become television, although its original value was to welcome this visitor" (Kapa, interview 2010)<sup>15</sup>. Sheila Byrne (Irish-British) Tumuaki Whakatairanga/ Head Of Department On-air Promotions, remarks on "cultural misunderstandings" at the beginning of her time at Māori Television: "I had the idea of using filters for the dawn ceremony [to launch the channel] and mentioned it at a meeting. Nobody told me that this was completely inappropriate – my staff said it to me later!" (Byrne, interview 2010). In television terms, the use of filters is eminently sensible, as it means the effect of dawn light is achieved, without having to record 'live' at dawn. However, from the Māori cultural standpoint, the whole event loses its significance if it is not actually carried out at sunrise. The balance between tikanga and television values demands knowledge and sensitivity, as well as a degree of pragmatism. The challenge is to accommodate the two, because both are necessary for a successful realisation of the purpose of the channel as currently articulated<sup>16</sup>. In the Irish context, this concern does not apply to the same degree, because the Gaelic cultural norms which were not obliterated over time have been mostly subsumed into Hiberno-English culture. Nonetheless, there is a real fear that broadcasting conventions can hobble the development of the language on screen. The writer Darach Ó Scolaí castigates the exigencies of transmission deadlines as forcing "Gaeilge lochtach ach formáid snasta" [faulty Irish but a slick format], so that the spirit is lost. He regards such work as "blaosc marbh" [a dead skull] (Ó Scolaí, 2008)<sup>17</sup>.

## 1.2 Tikanga in Production

In 'Celebrating Fourth Cinema' (2003) Barry Barclay puts forward the concept of Fourth Cinema, which describes film work done by indigenous people in 'an indigenous way'. Such a way results from the philosophical elements or essence of Indigenous film, which is often a challenge to communicate (Barclay, 2003: 7)<sup>18</sup>. Stephen Turner regards Fourth Cinema as a way of being rather than a way of seeing:

[N]o formal element of Fourth Cinema makes it distinctive. Really, it should be thought about not in terms of other cinema but in terms of other kinds of Maori expression, which are striated with the same values, principles and concerns. (Turner, e-mail 2009b)<sup>19</sup>

Kahurangi Waititi, a young documentary-maker, reflects on Barclay's philosophy of interiority or essence:

Māori films can achieve an essence but it is the type of essence that is difficult to 'see'. Perhaps one way of viewing interiority is to consider it as the inner wairua (spirit) that is conceived when the exteriority finds balance with the interiority. This balance is judged by those who understand the segment of life that is being portrayed in the film and they understand it because they have lived that story before or are connected to it somehow. Interiority can be gauged by this judgement and people may ask themselves questions such as: was this a real account of my people, area and culture? (Waititi, 2008)<sup>20</sup>

A culturally consonant production experience is ensured by drawing on the lived experience of the people involved, contributing to a filmed 'story' which contains wairua [spirit]. Māori writers and programme-makers refer to wairua as an unseen but vital element. Language is a key aspect of this wairua or spirit, and is often its most visible/audible manifestation. However, the right spirit relies on more than language alone. The centrality of wairua to broadcasting is recognised by staff at Māori Television and TG4. Manutai Schuster comments on the "vibe" of a good programme: "It's not necessarily linked to the language – it's about the idea, the type of audience" (interview 2010). Pádhraic Ó Ciardha also emphasises that the language is but one element in the equation. When explaining the difference between RTÉ and TG4, he says "ní hamháin an teanga, ach an cur chuige agus an fhealsúnacht a bheith difriúil" [not just the language, but also the approach and the philosophy should be different] (interview 2007).

This is where the intentions and integrity of the makers and the atmosphere of the production process play their part. "It's a cloak, an invisible cloak you wear... It's part of my sub-conscious thought process [and] just seemed to be natural to me" (Parr, 2007). The culturally fluent can tell if an onscreen scenario is natural or contrived, and it is clear that language provides people with a way in to such a thought process. For instance, a refreshing feature of the first programmes on TnaG was a sense of real Gaeltacht voices and way of seeing the world<sup>21</sup>. However, such 'authenticity' is not always contingent on the language used. As Stephens writes, it is "not just the fluency of the language, but the fluency of the voice, te reo o te Māori" (Stephens, 2009), which is an important goal for Māori Television. Similarly, Máire Ní Chonláin holds that as long as a story remains true to "paisean an duine nó meanma an duine, má tá mothúchán ar leith gur cuma cén

saibhreas teangan atá ann ach go bhfuil tú in ann é a chur trasna go soiléir” [a person’s passion, or their spirit, if there is a particular feeling there, it doesn’t matter how rich the language is as long as the story comes across clearly] (Ní Chonláin, interview 2008).

Some of the norms practised by Barclay and others in approaching Māori subject matter relate to the traditions of the oral culture<sup>22</sup>. In interviews, for example, there is a cyclical conversational ambiance, and the film-maker is primarily a listener (Barclay, 1990: 16-7). This shows respect for the people and for the kōrero [what is being said] (Barclay, 1990: 12; Waititi, 2006; Browne, 2005: 145-6; Smith, 2007: 73). The order of contributors is important, and interviewees are not alone, but usually flanked by friends or whānau [family members] (Barclay, 1990: 10-11). Waititi sees the ‘documentary subject’ “not... as an individual, but as someone representing whānau, hapu, iwi and whenua” [family, extended group, tribe and land] (2006)<sup>23</sup>. Merata Mita has also emphasised the centrality of such production practices to achieving a programme with a genuine heart. She says that elements such as communal discussion and allowing for apparently ‘off-topic’ conversation are “normal requirements, not special requirements... these are the things that have results” (2007)<sup>24</sup>.

Kelvin McDonald, former executive officer of Ngā Aho Whakaari and currently working at Māori Television, underlines the importance of protocol, explaining that it should influence pre-production research, consent, and practice throughout production and post-production: “Our preference is for all Māori key creatives, so that the content and worldview will be appropriate”(McDonald, interview 2006). As culturally competent crew are not always available, however, different strategies are employed to ensure proper practice. Producer Bryn Evans, for example, ‘cottonwools’ Pākehā crew members with Māori crew, so that the former can learn from the latter (Evans, interview 2010)<sup>25</sup>. However, as with language fluency, it should not be assumed that all Māori crew have a full knowledge of tikanga, and the producer must be aware of the variations in tradition between different iwi. Brad Haami also notes the importance of cultural preparation in the pre-production phase so that there are fewer delays and checks on set (2007).

Whilst appropriate behaviour flows naturally from people who are culturally aware, some have seen the need to lay out guidelines for the less initiated. Although guidelines and quotas are often construed as a helping hand towards the day when a native industry emerges, in the abundance of forms to be filled and boxes to be ticked there seems to be a loss of value, a loss of confidence in the inherent power of a culture. In the television industry, there is a need for guidelines to promote creativity within limits - but there is also need for space and trust. There is a continual struggle between creativity and control. The issue of respect for traditional values and process has been formalised by a handbook on protocol in television and film production *Urutahi koataata Māori/ Working with Māori in Film and Television* (Haami, 2008). Intended as a practical resource for producers, the book draws on the work of Māori practitioners and uses principles based on



kaupapa Māori. It includes a guide to cultural integrity in television production written by Tainui Stephens (member of the NZFC, and one of the founders of *Te Paepae Ataata*):

- Me hui a kanohi - ahakoa te aha [meet face-to-face, no matter what]
- Me ū tonu ki ngā tikanga Maori [demonstrate respect for Māori custom, i.e. ask advice of kaumātua]
- Me mātau ki tō te kaupapa [Understand what the project is about]
- Me marama ki ngā wero mai o te ao paoho [Understand the challenges of broadcasting, i.e. explain clearly to non-professionals/ members of the public what will be involved, to enable truly informed consent]
- Me whai mana tonu ngā mea e mana ana [Ensure authority is appropriately acknowledged, including IP]
- Me whai hua te katoa - mai runga mai raro [Something should come of the project for all involved] (Stephens, 2003; Haami, 2008: 39-41).<sup>26</sup>

It is clear that Stephens, Haami and Barclay are drawing from the same cultural well. Whilst some of the practices they suggest overlap with European courtesy, there are many more elements which are specific to Māori values. The ideal is that everyone involved in the production will have at least some appreciation of these, and that there should be a kaitiaki or consultant on hand to ensure that the work is carried out in the right spirit.

Although it is difficult to measure these elements in an analytical way, they are the core of any programme which is to reclaim the culture and speak to the native audience. Such work has cultural referents which the mainstream critic may not perceive. If the television station is to truly serve its croíphobal, there must be room for input from the communities who are strong in the language and culture, especially in the early years (Mac Eamharcaigh, 2008)<sup>27</sup>. To engage with the audience on a real level, unlike previous centralised and non-negotiable broadcast output, the national minority language station privileges a genuine connection with the croíphobal over technical polish. The kaupapa is to be sincere. After these crucial structural elements to approach and content have been satisfied, then attention may turn to the veneer. It is possible to make culturally resonant work within the frame of pre-existing genres, if the approach is appropriate. It is also incumbent on the production community to imagine alternative generic patterns in order to tell stories which require a new televisual frame. Ideally, both language and culture should influence production decisions as much as generic considerations.

## **2 Genre Choice on Minority Language Television Broadcasters**

Using established genres is convenient for publicity purposes and acceptance by the mainstream public. It also makes the buying in of external programmes easier to schedule, as television conventions are more or less internationally recognised. Audience expectations are often coloured by the material they have seen on other channels, so that they welcome 'familiar' formats<sup>28</sup>.

Producers with experience in ‘mainstream’ television are also familiar with these conventions, and may like to stay with the tried and trusted. Máire Ní Chonláin, Eagarthóir Coimisiúnaithe/ Commissioning Editor at TG4, remarks on the benefits of using a format, as it lends itself to creating a series which is helpful both for the financial security of the producer and the scheduling patterns of the broadcaster<sup>29</sup>. External funders are also likely to support projects whose results can be more convincingly estimated than an unknown quantity.

However, sometimes the existing genres or conventions do not sit well with aspects of the minoritised language culture, and here a tension arises. To rely on pre-existing formats is less revolutionary than might have been envisaged by community activists who set up the stations (Quinn, 2000). For instance, calls for proposals for the *Síle* slot for young viewers on TG4 actively seek “fashion, celebrity culture, interactivity, music” with “béim láidir ar dheardh agus ar bhrandáil” [strong emphasis on design and branding] (NIFTC, 2008). These values are indistinguishable from those used in youth programming on other ‘mainstream’ channels<sup>30</sup>. Indeed, Michael Cronin believes that many programmes on TG4 “do not look dissimilar to their anglophone counterparts”, which means that the emphasis is thus “with the language itself as the primary and essential marker of difference” (2005: 14) rather than on any culturally-rooted distinctiveness<sup>31</sup>. Galu (2009) remarks on the similarity of Māori Television’s *CODE* to TVNZ’s *Sports Cafe*, even down to the sponsor (Hyundai) and similar timeslot of Thursday evening. She also argues that the high occurrence of sport and music shows on Māori Television perpetuate the stereotype of the happy native, and provide “‘easy indigeneity’ for Pākehā viewers” (Galu, 2009). However, conscious use of majority cultural forms and interaction with their values can result in an interesting hybrid of local and global and, as noted earlier, sometimes the difference in sensibility is felt rather than seen.

## 2.1 Genre Twist

The use of genres from another culture is not always an act of capitulation. Indeed, it can be a clever way for an indigenous language broadcaster to deal with contemporary global culture on its own terms, putting a unique stamp on the ‘borrowed’ genre and transforming it. On both Māori Television and TG4, familiar genres are twisted or shifted into something else. Such an intertextual mode of cultural representation results in programmes which are “border crossers” (Glynn & Tyson, 2007). Ciarán Ó Cofaigh speaks of linking tradition to an established genre in the supernatural thriller *Na Cloigne*, which is

an-chomhaimseartha ó thaobh sheánra de ach ag an am céanna tá sé ceangailte go dlúth leis an miotas faoi na Sí agus an Saol Eile atá an-ghaelach. [very contemporary in terms of genre, but at the same time it is closely tied to the myths about fairies and the Other World that is very Gaelic] (Ó Cofaigh, in Quinn, 2009: 14)

Other examples of ‘border crossing’ programmes include *Cead Cainte* [permission to speak] (TG4, a current affairs discussion programme whose panel was composed of ordinary people) and *Kupu Huna* (Māori Television, game show quiz testing linguistic knowledge)<sup>32</sup>. It is obvious that the use of

the minoritised language in these generic contexts is also a differentiating factor. Writing about soap opera on Flemish television, Dhoest notes that within the confines of international formats and genres, “culturally specific elements provide a finish, a national ‘feel’” (Dhoest, 2007). This is true of material on Māori Television and TG4. Although often formats from other countries and cultures are used, the subject matter (usually dealing with people from Māori or Gaelach background), and sometimes style, result in a distinctive image.

Often the appropriation of majority culture by a minority takes the form of pastiche, as humour is an effective means of vaulting stereotypes<sup>33</sup>. Monahan remarks on the “formal and stylistic tendency to address generic conventions through parody or self-referential mockery” common in Irish film production since the 1990s (Monahan, 2007: 264), and I would argue that a similar trend obtains in TG4 and Māori Television. Both channels play with their minority image, drawing attention to the limitations they face in order to mock them. In this way, they evade a head-on attack on majority broadcasts in favour of amusing and subtle self-awareness. This self-deprecatory humour is a central feature of both indigenous cultures, although it has not generally been seen on national screens. (Neither TVNZ or RTÉ have been known for their success in homegrown comedy). One illustration of the flexible approach is the TG4 marketing campaign for English language dramas. Here characters from *Ros na Rún* (Irish soap opera) and *Cold Case* (American crime series) meet in an interrogation room, where the suspect ‘Daniel’ (as well as the audience) is astounded as his American questioners switch to Irish<sup>34</sup>. Similarly, Māori Television exploit anglophone drama in their ads for the sports panel programme *Code*, which is up against American drama series set in hospitals (e.g. *Grey’s Anatomy*, *ER*) as well as the local *Shortland Street* on other New Zealand stations in the same timeslot. “Tired of Wednesday night medical dramas..?” goes the voice-over, as *Code*’s presenters, dressed in surgical garb, strike ridiculous poses on a hospital set. Another promo for this programme mocked the low budget which made it impossible for the station to show live coverage of the various sporting events discussed on the programme. This shortcoming is turned to the advantage of *Code*, as focus is placed on the intelligent analysis provided by the panellists in an informal environment. These promos appeal to a self-aware audience, who, in the words of McElroy, see the text “twice over... in its originating, minority-language context and in its majority-language, cross-cultural (and indeed, multi-channel) context” (McElroy, 2007: 86).

It should be noted that some innovations actually result from the restrictions of broadcasting in a minority language, as discussed in Chapter 4<sup>35</sup>. Sometimes the choice of genre is made for reasons of money or experience. Independent producers and management at the television stations acknowledge that the budgets are lower than industry norms, and do not reflect the quality of work provided (Mac Murchú, 2008: 160; Paul, 2005: 44; Goan, 2006: 113; Ó Meallaigh, interview 2008; Evans, interview 2010). Although diversity of genre is good, for a broadcaster on a limited budget, it

can be more important to focus on particular genres and to play to the strengths of the production community<sup>36</sup>.

## 2.2 Genres on Indigenous National Language Television

*Tá blas ar an mbeagán./ He iti he pounamu.* [Small is good]

Strategic choices are made by the indigenous language broadcaster in order to work with and beyond the generic traditions of the television medium. Scholars have noted that when there is only a little minority language media, the focus tends to be on the news and young children's programmes, so that youth and popular programming are neglected (Moring, 2007: 25)<sup>37</sup>. Whilst such key genres remain important for the dedicated stations, they do not in themselves create the generic completeness essential to language status and maintenance<sup>38</sup>. TG4 and Māori Television aim for a broader generic range, and (although the latter does not commission by genre per se<sup>39</sup>) many popular 'mainstream' genres are to be seen on both. Existing genres favoured by both channels include children's (creating future audiences, ensuring the young hear the language in a 'fun' context), sport (hugely popular, and largely avoids language issue), music (vibrant and meaningful link to culture), reality tv and documentary<sup>40</sup>. The reasons for these choices are partly practical and partly ideological, as it is clear that choice and execution of genre also affects the image of the language<sup>41</sup>.

Children are known to be more linguistically malleable than adults, and if entertained in a language when young, they are more likely to pick it up later. This means a greater future audience and greater goodwill towards the language and the television channel. Staff at TG4 and Māori Television remark that big brands appeal to children, e.g. *The Muppets* (The Jim Henson Company), *Dora the Explorer* (Nickelodeon Studios), and although the broadcast of such material seems inimical to indigenous production, the stations are glad to portray popular 'mainstream' characters speaking the minority language fluently. The use of these (revoiced) programmes serves to normalise the language in the eyes of the young: "aisteach go leor tá siad an-sásta bheith ag breathnu ar na brandaí móra i nGaeilge" [strangely enough they are happy to watch the big brands in Irish] (Esslemont, cited in MacDubhghaill, 2006). Another advantage for a minority television broadcaster in showing such series is that much of the publicity work has already been done by Nickelodeon and other larger scale broadcasters and businesses<sup>42</sup>. However, audience members and critics have criticised the lack of indigenous content for children. Even if the language comes across in these programmes, the plot lines and characters are often based on anglophone cultural norms (Quinn, 1990; LaRose, interview 2008; Kapa, interview 2010). Edwards and Stephens, in their report on the Māori Television Rautaki Reo, draw attention to this issue, saying that care should be taken of dubbed cartoons which "come from a Pākehā perspective of what kids like and how they should behave" (2009: 6)<sup>43</sup>. In short, revoicing only changes the veneer, and the cultural content of the cartoons may remain alien to indigenous values (Browne, 2005: 164)<sup>44</sup>.

Sport and music are popular genres on minority language television, as they appeal to a wide range of people irrespective of their language ability. Sport in particular is seen by some language agencies as a potential portal into the te reo or Irish<sup>45</sup>. Both Māori Television and TG4 take a different angle from other national broadcasters on sports, providing a focus on competitions and events which would not otherwise have had national coverage (Goan, 2006: 112), e.g. *Waka Ama* (outrigger canoe) on Māori Television. As well as local games and international leagues, both broadcasters claim a place in the national psyche in their coverage of popular national sports, GAA (TG4)<sup>46</sup> and rugby (Māori Television).

The range of music and song programmes broadcast on both Māori Television and TG4 extends beyond their very successful traditional music programmes, two of which are discussed in detail later in this chapter. TG4 spotted a niche not served by other broadcasters, and since 2003 the country and western talent series *Glór Tíre* has enjoyed an extremely loyal audience (Ní Chonláin, interview 2008; Moore, interview 2008). Māori Television broadcasts a popular karaoke-style singing competition *Māorioke*, in which many genres of music feature without specific reference to Māoridom. Although in both *Glór Tíre* and *Māorioke* the lyrics of the songs are mainly in English, the hosts speak in Irish or te reo to the camera, and bilingually to the contestants, depending on their level of fluency. The interactive singing competition programmes on Māori Television and TG4 serve as a good example of the successful mingling of traditional and televisual ways. *Hōmai te Pakipaki*<sup>47</sup> and *Glas Vegas* draw their inspiration from the international *Idol* format, and are formulaic in terms of showing elimination rounds and building up to a final. However, the contestants, presenters and judges have a very different approach to the event, which is informed by the norms of their cultural backgrounds. For example, in *Hōmai te Pakipaki*, there is huge emphasis on whānau support, and the winner is decided by audience text-voting. Although the show is an adaptation of a non-Māori format and features a lot of English language, a strong Māori sensibility shines through because of the people involved (not to mention the presenter, Te Hamua Nikora<sup>48</sup>, who tongue-in-cheek regularly compliments his own iwi). The talent show *Glas Vegas* (Adare Productions, commissioned by RTÉ for TG4) showcases a range of performers (dance, recitation, and acrobatics feature as well as singing). There is a panel of three encouraging (if sometimes a little stilted and scripted) judges, each of whom ‘represents’ two groups or contestants each week. Whilst neither programme may be said to reflect traditional performance on a sustained basis, both rely on culturally-rooted ways of treating people (presenting, commenting, supporting) which differ greatly from the more ‘predatory’ style of their *Idol* progenitor.

Reality Television programmes similarly appeal to both ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’, providing another window on the minority language world. In 2008 TG4 launched their search for the best farmer in Ireland, with 12 competitors on *Feirm Factor*. Lifestyle programmes on Māori Television such as *DIY Marae* (Screentime, 2005-) and *Aunty Moves In* (TopShelf Productions, 2009-) foreground

traditional values such as *whānaungatanga*, whilst *Toa o Aotearoa* (Māui Productions, 2007-) over a two-week period tests the physical and mental endurance of its ‘warrior’ participants, who, during the course of the recording, live and train together in the bush near Lake Rotorua. The celebrity challenge to learn a musical instrument in *Faoi Lán Cheoil* (Stirling Television, 2008) on TG4 celebrates the effort and skill required of traditional musicians. In both cases, traditional values and skills are foregrounded and rewarded, and yet the programmes often appeal to a culturally curious viewership as well as to the *croíphobal*. Jo Smith (2006) has read Māori Television’s *DIY Marae* as an interesting case where an international lifestyle format (home-makeover) is turned into a community rebuilding event, facilitated by television. This point also applies to S4C’s *Pedair Wal* [four walls] (Cwmni Fflic, 2006), and links to the analysis of Ruth McElroy, who notes that the Welsh-language programme shows not only house design, but also, and less overtly, “how to be at home in a linguistic and cultural community from which the viewer is either geographically apart or is yet to fully comprehend linguistically” (McElroy, 2008: 247). As it is difficult to make credible entertainment in minoritised language (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007), new genres are useful tools in presenting another image. Reality Television depicts the language in its raw state, apparently unedited and unscripted, making it more emotionally accessible to non-fluent speakers. The apparent immediacy of Reality Television provides an unthreatening way in for learners who want to imagine themselves in relation to the language community.

For a minority language broadcaster, the benefits of programmes based on actuality are three-fold. Firstly, the range of potential material is wide, because there are many aspects of the minority community which have not yet found a place on national screens. Secondly, in making documentary, a broadcaster can engage their audience’s sense of story on a lower budget than that demanded by drama. Thirdly, documentary is also a good training ground for new producers. Although there are variations depending on format and subject matter, documentary is in general relatively quick to turn around, from proposal to commission to broadcast. Mícheál Ó Meallaigh, Stiúrthóir Coimisiúnaithe/ Commissioning Director at TG4, notes that the channel actively seeks innovation by working with newcomers to the industry:

Bíonn paisean agus fuinneamh acu don ábhar agus ní bhíonn an deis céanna ar fáil ó craoltóirí móra. [They have a passion and an energy for the subject, and they do not get the same chance from the bigger broadcasters] (Ó Meallaigh, interview 2008)

There are currently two major documentary slots on TG4. Single one-hour documentaries are broadcast in primetime midweek under the title *Anamnocht* [The Naked Soul, or ‘Soul-Revealing’ ([www.tg4.ie](http://www.tg4.ie))]. Focusing on events rather than individuals, the slot aims to explore “fascinating aspects of our culture, heritage, history, literature and people” (TG4, 2008)<sup>49</sup>. Māori Television has three one-hour documentary slots a week: *Pakipumeka Aotearoa* [New Zealand documentary] (supported by New Zealand on Air, with up to 50% Maori language), *Koputu Taonga*: (100% te reo

– this is usually a replay of TVNZ’s *Waka Huia*) and *Pakipumeka o te Ao* [international documentary]<sup>50</sup>.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the complex relations between television, nation and the indigenous community give rise to broadcasting which, although figured as a national public service, actually goes beyond the nation-state. TG4 has so far managed to strike a balance between the particular and the general, the local and the supra-national. The danger of *leathshúileachas* [half-eye-ism], of examining the local so intently that we ignore the wider world, is offset by the range of travel programmes in particular. This is in keeping with the deliberate policy of opening Irish up to the outside world (on its own terms)<sup>51</sup>. To hear unfamiliar languages translated into Irish for the viewers’ comprehension puts a new complexion on the Irish itself. Writer, explorer and programme-maker Dermot Somers stresses that people in Ireland sometimes seem to have a “subconscious Atlantis” mentality in relation to the importance of our own culture. He argues that we need programmes which move out of the country in order to contextualise this “embedded sense of uniqueness”, reflecting that when we can look at other people “with interest and appreciation... we will actually reflect ourselves” (2003). By drawing on our own linguistic and cultural heritage, we may relate to other people who are also experiencing language change, such as the Nemet in Siberia, as visited by Somers’ series *Turas Tréadacha* [Great Nomadic Journeys] (Crossing The Line Films, 2001). Māori Television has broadcast a series of young people’s travel/exploration documentaries. In *Kia ora Ni Hao!* and *Kia ora Hola!* (GAProductions, 2008 and 2009) six teenagers from Māori language schools in Rotorua travelled to China and Chile respectively<sup>52</sup>. They spend several weeks with host families and attend local schools, where they can practice the language and experience the culture of the country. Some filming is carried out by the production company, but each student also has their own camera to record in te reo their own personal impressions and experiences.

Both TG4 and Māori Television have gained kudos from critics for their intelligent acquisition and scheduling of foreign-language programmes, particularly documentaries. It may seem ironic that foreign (i.e. non-English and non-indigenous) language programmes provide an identity for station, but most non-fluent speakers mention this aspect of the schedule as the most appealing to them. Jim Mather (2007) notes that “We [Māori Television] tend to get good recognition for our international documentaries because they’re different.. [and for the] quirky arthouse movies”, which are less likely to be shown by more commercial broadcasters. Ó Coileáin attributes the strong recognition that TG4 enjoys even among non-Irish-speakers to its being inclusive, and providing interesting alternatives to other national broadcasters. “TG4 is anti-elitist, the everyman station... I think it’s great that a 70-year-old woman from the bingo club in rural Donegal should see a Luis Buñuel film” (interview 2008). In some ways, the effect of the indigenous minority station is to bypass anglophone culture in linking native and foreign broadcast material<sup>53</sup>.

Apart from the genres mentioned above, Māori Television and TG4 also show programmes which differ from those on 'mainstream' broadcasters. These programmes appeal particularly to the *croíphobail* at a level beyond that of form and content. They have a certain spirit which speaks to the indigenous audience. In these programmes, elements of the language and culture are not merely visible on screen, but actually form the environment in which the programmes are conceived and produced. One such 'genre' is reminiscence and oral culture (*Maumahara* (Māori Television)/ *Comhrá* (TG4)). The importance of recording and archiving "all of our old people, *kuia* and *kaumātua*, before they move on" (Morgan, interview 2009) is particularly urgent in the Māori context (Pouwhare, 2007, quoted in Mane, 2009: 217), because there has been no systematic attempt to record this material before. Although much field and folklore recording has already been carried out in Ireland over the decades since independence, TG4 provides another space for informal reminiscence. Máirtín Tom Sheáinín (a well-known broadcaster from *Radió na Gaeltachta*) hosts an interview programme with ordinary people called *Comhrá* [Conversation]. Recorded in the summer over three weeks, the programme interviews older people from around the country, who "wouldn't go on telly in a million years, but for Máirtín they'll do it" (Moore, interview 2008). Quite a number of the people have passed on since their 'conversation', which makes the recording even more valuable. These old people, as well as sharing cultural riches, are also, in the words of Eruera Morgan, "prominent exponents of the language" (Morgan, interview 2009).

Language-learning shows are also popular in some MLM contexts, where linguistic features are given priority over content. However, this type of programme is avoided by TG4, as language-learning resources are readily available from other outlets in Ireland. Māori Television, on the other hand, is currently (May 2010) running two series, *Tōku Reo* (Kura Productions, 2008-) for beginners (on Māori Television) and *Ako* (on Te Reo channel) for intermediate learners<sup>54</sup>. Ironically, due to the 100% te reo prime time policy at Māori Television, there were problems in finding a suitable slot for the 50% reo-content *Tōku Reo* series (Parr, interview 2007). Its precursor *Kōrero Mai* (discussed in detail later) presented a popular language-learning soap *Ākina*, where context was given for language use, and there was more of an emphasis on conversational interaction (Mane, 2009: 182-4, 317). Both TG4 and Māori Television have also screened reality language-learning shows, where contestants live together and try to learn the language (*Ní Gaeilgeoir Mé* (Green Inc for TG4, 2005) and *Waka Reo* (Tahu TV for Māori Television, 2005-8)<sup>55</sup>. The proportion and type of 'language rescue' seen on each station is related to the abilities and interests of their imagined audiences. Both recovery and refamiliarisation can be seen through the programming of Māori Television and TG4 to different degrees, and often, the two overlap. Māori Television operates semi-didactically in programmes like *Kōrero Mai*, and *Whatukura*, aiding language recovery, and informally in shows like *Code*, where the language is used more sporadically. Refamiliarisation can be seen in TG4's *Ros na Rún*, and (through a monolingual



universe) in *Aifric*. The image of the language is more subtly redrawn in programmes where there is refamiliarisation, as will be discussed in the analysis section.

Māori Television and TG4 use existing genres with a greater or lesser degree of 'twist' in order to reach their various audiences. They aim to 'talk in' to fluent communities with targeted programmes such as *Ngā Pari Karangaranga o te Motu* (Māori Television) and *Comhrá* (TG4), and to 'talk out' to a broader audience with popular genres which do not rely heavily on the language. However, both stations have been surprised by the levels of interest from apparent outsiders in programmes which they had considered more appealing to fluent speakers. *Comhrá* surpassed the expectations of TG4 in its popularity (Moore, interview 2008), and Te Māngai Pāho research has shown that non-fluent audiences tend to also watch and enjoy the programmes with high te reo content on Māori Television (2009: 6-7). This reduces the burden of the stations to some extent, as they may not have to serve as disparate a group as they had first imagined. It seems that with the aid of subtitles, non-fluent audiences who are interested in the programming are able to watch for the very elements (language and culture) which might have been thought to make the programme less accessible.

### **3 Analysis of Programmes**

The programmes chosen for analysis here all take elements from established television genres and combine them with aspects of indigenous language and culture which are less frequently seen on television. The effect is to convey a certain image of the language through its interaction with a familiar genre. However, the use of the minority language also unsettles the genre, so that genre and language take turns playing the roles of host and guest to each other. Although the image of the language is ever-changing, two recurring elements contribute to its construction on screen: áit(iúlacht)/ whenua [a sense of place] and tāngata/ pobal [types of characters/ people], concepts closely related to indigenous cultural priorities. In this section, four programmes are analysed in terms of the way the indigenous minority language is contextualised by these elements, and also the way in which the language itself is used on screen and on set and portrayed on screen (via subtitling, use of dialect, etc). Through a consideration of these elements, a certain image of the language may be apprehended through the programmes.

The first programme to be discussed is TG4's *Aifric* (a live action comedy drama series for young teenagers), a relatively conventional genre with the purpose of entertainment which is given an extra dimension through its use of the Irish language on screen and on set. This is followed by an examination of Māori Television's *Kōrero Mai*, a language-learning soap opera hybrid, where two conventional genres have been merged into a new one for the purpose of promoting te reo and tikanga Māori. Finally, *Mōteatea* (the performance of traditional Māori songs) and *Abair Amhrán* (a

creative showgrounding of traditional Irish song) are compared as particular case studies of an indigenous-specific genre.

In these programmes, three key audiences are addressed: youth (*Aifric*), language-learners (*Kōrero Mai*) and croíphobail (*Mōteatea* and *Abair Amhráin*). When it comes to youth audiences, TG4 is unusually overt about the language element of their broadcast mission:

Mar chainéal tá orainn... na bealaí is fearr a aimsiú le freastal ar riachtanais ábhair leanáí agus daoine óga agus a chinntiú ar an mbealach is fearr go mbeidh siad ag teacht i dtreo na Gaeilge ó aois an-óg/how best to ensure that [children and young people] will gravitate towards the language from a very young age. (Annual Report 2008 TG4: 25)

If the use of the language by Māori Television and TG4 as a means of differentiation from other broadcasters is to be more than a gimmick, the broadcasters must provide spaces which respect the features of the language and its speakers which do not lend themselves to anglo-american forms and formats. Nevertheless, the mere presence of the alternative language on screen and behind the scenes imposes an inflection - however slight so far - upon this foreign syntax. It is the beginning of the process. The use of the indigenous language creates a space in which to reimagine alternatives.

### 3.1 Drama - *Aifric*

TG4 has been successful in the realm of drama, moving from the popular comedy series of its first years to more ambitious (and co-funded) series with darker themes<sup>56</sup>. The soap opera *Ros na Rún* (Eo Teilifís & Tyrone Productions, 1996-present) is multi-layered and aims for realism, whilst *Seacht* (Eo Teilifís, Tyrone Productions & Stirling Film and Television, co-funded by NIFTC, 2007), the edgy young adult series from Northern Ireland, revels in emotional extremes. *Trí Scéal* (Crimson Films, 2000) and the occasional short film from the Oscailt and Lasair schemes, co-funded by the Irish Film Board, are cinematic. One-off seasonal comedy-drama series, such as *Paddywhackery* (Dough Productions, 2007), based on the famous autobiography *Peig* studied in schools as a compulsory feature of the examination course for many generations; *Rásaí na Gaillimhe* (Great Western Films, 2008) (co-funded by the BAI, second in popularity only to *Glór Tíre*)<sup>57</sup> and *The Running Mate* (Rubicon Films, 2007), which revels in political intrigue at the parish pump level, address a primarily English-speaking audience. *Aifric* differs in its target audience (teens) and in its mentor-like approach to production. It is designed to be organic, to grow with the actors and to develop talent. Continuity was achieved over the five years working on the *Aifric* project (three years of production), as the same core cast and crew were involved<sup>58</sup>. The series was produced by Telegael, based in An Spidéal in the Conamara Gaeltacht, about 15k from Galway city, was one of the first independent production companies set up to provide Irish language material for RTÉ and the then envisaged Teilifís na Gaeilge<sup>59</sup>.

The quality of *Aifric* has been recognised by several awards: the IFTA (Irish Film and Television Awards) for Best Children's/Youth Programme in 2007, 2008 and 2009, the Bronze Torc at the

2008 Celtic Media Festival (Children's category), and a special mention at the Prix Circom Regional 2008, as well as awards for individual cast members. The series was also nominated in the category of Best Drama Series at the Celtic Film Festival and the TVNow Awards in 2007. Series one of *Aifric* was the most watched children's programme on TG4 in 2006 and the official programme website ([www.aifric.tv](http://www.aifric.tv)) received over 65,000 hits in the first week of broadcast of the series in November 2006. In late October 2008, *Aifric* was the 12th most watched of all TG4 programmes for teens, with a 12% share for that age group (Ní Ghríofa, e-mail 2008). *Aifric* is attractive to tweens and teens, and renders the Irish language 'cool' as it is used as a normal means of communication in a hyper-real setting (with sets redolent of the American and Australian series familiar to this audience, such as *Home and Away*). It is difficult to reach this age-group, which is one of the more demanding television audiences, distracted as they are by other leisure activities and technological devices, and the high cost and high risk of live action programming for older children is often off-putting for small television stations.

With more than 100 crew and a cast of almost 150 actors, *Aifric* was one of the largest scale longer-term drama productions made for TG4. The importance afforded *Aifric* is shown by its prominent position in the schedule: episode one of the first series was broadcast on HallowE'en 2006, the traditional start of the Celtic new year, as part of TG4's ten year anniversary celebrations. *Aifric*'s 17h slot is on the cusp between *Cúla 4* (after-school programming for primary) and *Síle* (for an older school-age audience). It is aimed at the same people who often watch *Home and Away* and *The OC*, various British soaps and American sit coms - in fact, young people with similar tastes to the cast members (Butler, 2009). Paul Mercier, the director of *Aifric*, believes there is a requirement for indigenous drama for teenagers on Irish television to counteract material from the US:

This is not saying that *The Simpsons* and *Friends* are necessarily negative influences, but this whole notion of existence and identity as defined and created by imported television programmes has to be challenged. When you add in the Gaeltacht dimension, it is even more important to give teenagers a sense of confidence in their own language and culture. (Mercier, quoted in Siggins, 2005)

The portrayal of native culture on screen is subtle. Whilst the setting is recognisably Irish, there is an element of hyperrealism in the colour and preponderance of interiors. The storylines of *Aifric* are universal, albeit with a realistic local flavour, dealing with characters and relationships to the exclusion of broader social affairs. Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin, co-creator of the series, notes "We wanted it to be funny... I wasn't interested in 'issues' like teen pregnancy" (interview 2010).

### ***Áit [sense of place] agus Pobal [community]***

*Aifric* is set in the fictional western town of Leitir Lár [central hillside], where the hub of the young characters' lives lies between school, home and the café, Tigh Bhaba, in a geographical zone eerily similar to *Home and Away* (without the sunny beaches). The school features predominantly in many episodes - corridors, classrooms, gym, yard. References are made to other local schools, although

we never see them. Occasionally a character will venture elsewhere (e.g. hospital), but most important events occur in Leitir Lár itself. Exterior shots are quite rare, although in series one there was an extended piece on the local beach as Aifric's mother spearheaded a campaign to win a blue flag (an ecological standard). As a 'blow-in' family, the de Spáinns are slightly different from longer-term inhabitants of Leitir Lár, although there are not any major problems of integration. Family and friends are central to each episode, with emphasis on community events and participation. In previous Irish literary and theatrical production, the 'authentic' western community was depicted as self-sufficient, and an element of this persists in *Aifric*, as appropriate to the comedy-drama genre, although in Leitir Lár there is full acceptance of technology and trappings of contemporary life<sup>60</sup>. The opening sequence (just over one minute in duration) features close-ups of Aifric's singing face and mid shots of her dancing, superimposed over shots of Conamara roads and countryside, the scenery and camera moving swiftly, and weather patterns speeded up. This creates an interesting juxtaposition between the wild rugged west and the sophisticated, lip-glossed teenager, but the contrast is not depicted as problematic. Glamour belongs to these rural locations as much to as any city.

The series follows a similar format to contemporary anglophone live-action drama for young viewers. The themes of *Aifric* are also consonant with this genre - relationships with friends, family and figures of authority. The characters, however, are more strongly individualised than in many of these series, and there is subtlety in the portrayal of the 'baddies'. Aifric's wacky family and sometimes fickle schoolfellows provide a web of challenges as she goes about her daily life. The teachers are laughed at as caricatures, but in a gentle manner, and their human side is shown. Similarly, the most aggravating baddies (Claudia and pals march down the corridor of the school to a techno beat, arrogance personified) reveal a vulnerable side, so that there is no easy cartoon black and white judgement ('Spáslong'<sup>61</sup>). Social and cultural norms are seen in the interactions between boys and girls: there is realistic shyness and restraint in the communications between Maidhc, Aifric and Ben ('Spáslong'). Also, these otherwise unstoppable characters take on a more respectful demeanour before their teachers for the most part. In the episode 'Spáslong', the consequences of illicit parties, online bullying and ill-judged kissing are treated with an intelligent lightness of touch which allows for moments of tension and regret, a depth not seen in many t(w)een dramas. The Aifric character speaks in voice-over at the end of this episode to conclude that they were all to blame for the bullying of a classmate. This emphasis on collectivity and solidarity shows an awareness of the effect of one person's actions on others, whilst reinforcing the cosiness of the teenager's interdependent social circle.

Multiple storylines mesh over what might otherwise appear to be the 'lesson', so that it is not blatant. Significantly, the viewers are addressed as members of a similar culture, who understand its norms and expectations, rather than as some pan-gobal 'youth audience' who exist only to be

entertained. Visual and narrative humour also take the sting out of ‘normal’ concerns, so that teenage viewers, jaded with discussions of issues such as eating disorders and self-esteem, may laugh rather than agonise over them in the safe *Aifric* zone of genuine friendship. Whilst practising for a talent contest, the girls have tea in Tigh Bhaba, where the handsome Maidhc serves them chips and pizza. Sophie starts to order water, but is talked out of it by plumper Zara, who reminds her she needs more energy for dancing (‘Aifric agus Zara’). In the ridiculous montage for the dance auditions sequence, we enjoy the reversal of expectation and the triumph of the underdog. After this almost slapstick sequence comes the announcement of Zara’s victory, giving the lie to Aifric’s belief earlier in the episode that only girls with a certain type of figure could be successful in dancing. This entertaining sequence depicts teens coping with generic pressures albeit in a specific setting and with regard to specific cultural norms.

### ***Teanga [language]***

Gaeilge Chonamara (western dialect) is the main variety of Irish used in *Aifric*, with a few exceptions, as some actors come from different parts of the country<sup>62</sup>. Unlike other drama series on TG4, there is virtually no English spoken in *Aifric*, although there are conversational on-screen subtitles. One reason for the absence of English is that the world of *Aifric* is its own bubble, and not intended to reflect messy reality. Leitir Lár is a unique environment in many respects, the perfect location for *Aifric*’s eastern family to find space to be themselves in all their alterity, and the language element is never remarked upon<sup>63</sup>. Irish is shown as equal to expressing the vicissitudes of teenage life, and constitutes an unquestioned element thereof. Neither is there reference to English. In an interview for the English language newspaper *The Irish Times*, director Paul Mercier claims that

[*Aifric*] doesn’t have to make any excuses for the fact that it’s in the Irish language because it doesn’t matter what language it’s in. The programme is teenage orientated... the story is coming from the kids and there’s a sense that it’s about them and their world - their point of view, rather than forcing something on them. (Mercier, 2008, quoted in Mullin, 2008)

Whilst it is true that a non-fluent-speaking audience may enjoy the programme, in fact the relation between language and storyline is somewhat more nuanced.

The televisual world of *Aifric*, even without overt reference to traditional Irish language culture, is distinctly different to English-language material. As ways of speaking are linked to ways of thinking and seeing, to speak a minority language in the context of a majority genre means that the genre itself must be seen and thought of in another way. The use of the Irish language enables a new inflection on generic themes, as it creates a distancing layer between reality and the drama. In the American and Australian drama popular with this age group in Ireland, settings, lifestyles and accents differ greatly from those of the target audience, who watch for escapism. Ironically, such escapism is possible also with *Aifric*, because most of its audience are not fluent speakers, which means that an effect of dramatic distance is achieved. Even in Gaeltacht areas, few young people

would use the language unmixed with English or in so many domains as do the onscreen characters<sup>64</sup>. The depiction of a fully-rounded life in Irish without reference to the English language ubiquitous in the lives of the audience is a radical alternative to other television drama.

The way the language is used is intimately linked to the portrayal of character and to the atmosphere of the story. The scripts for the series were worked on intensively over a two-year period by a writing team fluent in Irish and experienced in television drama. Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin explains that the absence of English creates a different atmosphere in the ‘*Aifric* universe’. Everyday speech in Irish is heightened to make it more dramatic, as is common in programmes scripted in any language: “tá snas breise curtha ar an gcaint lena dhéanamh spésiúil agus drámatúil” [there is an extra ‘gloss’ on the dialogue to make it interesting and dramatic] (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010). With *Aifric*, sensitivity to dialect difference is also an integral part of the ‘voice’ of a character<sup>65</sup>. Ironically, part of the realism and atmosphere of the Irish language used is that some commonly-used English nouns are accepted, where to invent an Irish one would be cumbersome and draw unwanted attention to the constructed nature of the script. As Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin remarks,

‘Sleepover’ a thug muid ar sleepover. Bheadh sé go hiomlán bréagach a bheith ag cumadh téarma dó – domsa, thabharfadh sé le fios gur ‘drawmah Gwaylgah’ a bhí idir lámha againn. [We called a ‘sleepover’ a ‘sleepover’. It would be completely false to be inventing a term for it – to me, it would show that we were making an ‘Irish language learners drama’ [focusing on the language per se, using pedantic or literal translations from English without regard to naturalness]] (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010)

It should be noted, however, that such borrowings were not used by the writers for verbal phrases, even though this is the language practice of many young Gaeltacht people.

In contrast to other drama productions for TG4, where fluent actors ad lib or invent lines more suitable to their character, on *Aifric* the actors mostly stuck to the script as so much work had gone into it<sup>66</sup>. Another unusual feature of the shoot (which took place over 13 consecutive weeks in summer to coincide with the actors’ school holidays) was that the language used on set was almost exclusively Irish. This was the decision of the director Mercier, who has a strong commitment to the language. Mac Dhonnagáin, who has worked on Irish-language television productions for over two decades, remarks: “Ní raibh sé sin feicthe agam roimhe sin agus thaitin sé go mór liom” [I had not seen that before, and I really appreciated it] (interview 2010).

*Aifric* presents gently humorous stories about mostly lovable and somewhat quirky characters with credible relationships. As the social concerns of teenage life centre on friends and family, their geographical isolation is rendered irrelevant. The image of the Irish language conveyed by *Aifric* is one of a natural means of communication amongst attractive characters. It is but one more element in their unselfconscious quirkiness, and through its distancing effect on a socio-linguistically aware

audience, may actually make the characters more believable. Although the language itself is not foregrounded as a theme in the drama, its treatment results from a very conscious process of decision-making on the part of the programme-makers. Drawn from layered scripts with minimal English, and performed by native-speaking actors, there is a strong drive to present a vibrant and funny Irish-speaking world for the benefit of the young audience.

### **3.2 Language Learning – *Kōrero Mai***

*Ākina* [Dynamism/ Encouragement] is the playful and melodramatic soap opera within the language-learning programme *Kōrero Mai* [Speak to Me]. *Kōrero Mai* ran for five years on Māori Television, screening six days a week at primetime (19h, with repeats at 22h30) until 2008, when it moved to TVNZ, the first programme to move from Māori Television to a ‘mainstream’ channel<sup>67</sup>. Each episode has “a clear language plan” and the series had a te reo target (Hoey, e-mail 2010). The amount of Māori used in the stories is designed to increase as the series progresses (in tandem with the expected growing competence of the viewers). In the first year, the te reo target was 15-20%, and after a review of each year’s material, the target is increased (Hoey, e-mail 2010). The series is designed to be repeated<sup>68</sup>, and the producers note on their website that learners would also benefit from recording and replaying the programme. Adult language-learners have found this series useful in supporting their te reo practice (Mane, 2009). They also enjoy the series as entertainment in the absence of any other indigenous television drama<sup>69</sup>.

Indeed, there has not yet been much Māori drama on television, apart from the *Iti Pounamu* showcase of shorts from the burgeoning Māori film-making sector. Although several distinct new talents are coming to the fore in cinema, their counterparts in television are less visible. One reason for the paucity of drama on Māori Television so far is that as a genre, it demands significant investment. The biggest drama series commissioned by Māori Television, *Kaitangata Twitch* (Shed TV Ltd, 2010<sup>70</sup>), was actually made by a Pākehā company. Based on the children’s book by Margaret Mahy, the drama series engages with themes of the supernatural, family relationships, the Māori link to land and guardianship role, and social tensions in small communities. Although questions have been rightly raised as to why a Pākehā company was chosen to produce a series likely to act as a flagship for Māori Television abroad<sup>71</sup>, it is acknowledged that the success of *Kaitangata Twitch* should lead to an expansion of possibilities for Māori companies to make drama for the channel in the future (Kahi, 2010).

As discussed earlier, part of the role of Māori Television is to ensure that tikanga Māori is respected in the production process. For this reason, it is important that independent producers who make programmes for the channel have a good grounding in tikanga and reo. Cinco Cine is one of the production houses mentioned in Chapter 4 which has made a positive commitment to the Māori language and culture<sup>72</sup>. It aims to “normalise the language through its use in television and film, and

the adoption of key phrases into mainstream culture” (Cinco Cine, 2008). In support of te reo, the company has worked in conjunction with government funding agencies such as New Zealand on Air, Ministry of Education, Te Māngai Pāho, the Ministry of Economic Development, Te Taura Whiri, Mā Te Reo and Te Puni Kōkiri. Cinco Cine also produced *Whānau* (a Māori language-learning series for people without a reo background) for TVOne. The aim of *Kōrero Mai* was to be an entertaining introduction to te reo, as Hoey remarks: “If we could hook [viewers] in with a soap, we could then teach them the language!” (Hoey, e-mail 2010)

To create *Ākina*, Cinco Cine had two storyliners, a language consultant [kaiārahi reo] and four writers<sup>73</sup>. The role of the kaiārahi reo (Pānia Papa in 2007) was to write the language plan before the drama was written, and to be present on set to ensure rhythm and pronunciation were correct<sup>74</sup>. As was the case with *Aifric*, and as mentioned in Chapter 4, there is a challenge in finding young actors with fluency in the indigenous language, and *Ākina* was no exception (Wigby-Ngatai, 2007, quoted in Throng, 2007). The eight main characters are played by actors with varying degrees of experience – from former television presenters to professional theatre and screen actors. Both Māori and English are used on set, as the majority of the actors and at least 50% of the crew are bilingual. Executive producer Nicole Hoey explains that “commands are normally given in Te Reo Māori and technical discussions are held in English” (Hoey, e-mail 2009). This is a common feature of bilingual productions, where complicated matters are in English so that everyone will understand, and the more basic instructions in the minoritised language. It is a first step towards a scenario where all the work on set will also be in the minoritised language.

Many language learning programmes designed to teach a ‘foreign’ language tend to place the host as a stand-in for the learner, engaging with semi-staged situations which demand the use of particular language features. The element of drama in *Ākina*, however, provides more realistic contexts for the use of the language<sup>75</sup>. Soap opera is a genre known for its (melo)dramatic plot and long-running serial nature in which a selection of interdependent and inter-generational characters are followed by a loyal audience over time. Its ‘addictive’ quality and human interest attract audiences, whose enjoyment of the intricate plot twists and character development is often great enough to forgive occasionally implausible elements. *Ākina* exploits the strengths of soap opera cleverly, despite its small number of characters and limited sets. The hybrid language-learning soap opera format makes language-learning entertaining,<sup>76</sup> and it also means that the type of language used is more relevant to the needs of minority language learners.

The genre of soap opera has been twisted in two ways – to include language-learning and to foreground aspects of the Māori worldview. Towards the end of some episodes, the studio presenter Piripi Taylor<sup>77</sup> links us into an exploration of marae (community meeting places) around the country<sup>78</sup>. Other segments in the early series explicitly teach waiata and tikanga. While the



programme is structured around the soap drama *Ākina*, whose acting style and scenarios are relatively realistic and plausible, the primary aim is didactic. The narrative is regularly interrupted by studio interludes, and every third episode takes the form of a conventional tutorial, revising the constructions and words of that week. The studio segments, introduced by a 4-note sting, centre a smiling, friendly presenter in mid-shot to medium close-up. He stands, as in traditional Māori oratory, and speaks directly to camera<sup>79</sup>. At the end of the programme, Taylor guides the viewers to pay conscious attention to the words and phrases used in *Ākina*. There are three stages to the review. Firstly, we watch the exchange between two characters without English subtitles. Then a blue screen appears with the target phrase printed in white font (about eight phrases, 2-3 examples each), and the presenter reads it in both languages. Secondly, target words (usually around 10) are revisited, with a couple of examples of each from different contexts. Thirdly, the *kīwaha* section looks back over phrases encountered in previous episodes. For these, there is just one example of each. Although the phrases appear with relevant sections underlined, e.g. “Me rūkahu rawa? Do I have to lie?” the pace is fast, and there is scarcely enough time to repeat the phrase or to write it down. The level of these 2007 episodes seems to be high-intermediate, which, as the series had then been running for 4 years, is not surprising.

In its aim to attract audiences with varying language abilities and cultural knowledge, *Kōrero Mai* engages with the issue of language ‘image’, reflecting contemporary mixing with English. There is an emphasis on colloquial phrases, some of which seem to be direct translations from English, e.g. Hariata’s comment to Wiki: “Nau mai ki tōku ao”/ Welcome to my world<sup>80</sup>. The register of the subtitles reflects the informal atmosphere of the show, avoiding the problems of over-literal translation and formality sometimes seen in the subtitling of other programmes on the channel, as discussed in Chapter 4. For example, after watching a DVD together, Stevie says to Pare: “Te mutunga kē mai nei o te koretake!” [lit. Actually, that was the very limit of uselessness], which is translated in the subtitles as ‘It really sucked!’

### ***Whenua [land] ā Tāngata [people]***

*Ākina* ended the 2006 series with the shock death of Hone in a car crash on his wedding day. In 2007 topics included post-traumatic stress, Māori land claims and broken tapu [sacred and restricted customs], as well as the soap staples of complicated relationships and romance<sup>81</sup>. Sibling tensions, work disappointments, and intergenerational relationships make up the daily trials of the *Ākina* characters. Tini, the bereaved fiancée, finds it difficult to cope without Hone, and ends up in hospital. Maru is new in town, but cannot seem to leave his troubled past behind. Would-be filmmaker Parearau is crushed after criticism, and begins to plan a career change. Quinn suffers perpetual guilt and nightmares after the fatal car accident on the day of his best friend’s wedding. The characters are related to each other mainly by romance, in the dyadic tradition of American-style soap operas. This is perhaps inevitable, given the scale of the production, with only eight core

cast members. However, the centrality of whānaungtanga to Māori life is also reflected, and there are many other close relationships based on kinship ties. Sisters Wiki and Hariata clash in confined quarters, Stevie supports Pare, and Māia advises her cousin Quinn.

Recorded in Auckland, exterior scenes feature the iconic Harbour Bridge and Britomart by night. These urban spaces are not generally associated with the speaking of te reo Māori, but the suspension of disbelief necessary for soap opera plotlines is easily extended to encompass the use of the minoritised language in a big city. Placing te reo in a metropolitan context points towards a wished-for future, where the language is seen and heard in a wider range of social and geographical domains than is currently the case. The drive of *Kōrero Mai* is aspirational, encouraging the regeneration of te reo and its uptake by new speakers. It should also be noted that the language is not divorced from its tikanga and tradition, as evidenced by the ‘real life’ clips of waiata and marae which sometimes follow the drama. In *Ākina* itself, much of the action takes place in the city apartment block where the main characters live. Characters often meet in the local café, and there are some scenes in a lawyer’s office (where the venal Tai and idealistic Mere clash over matters professional and personal). As in many soap operas, the scenes are overwhelmingly interior and only occasionally do the characters venture outside. Exterior scenes usually involve people getting in or out of cars, and sometimes working in the garden. Therefore there is not a strong visual sense of place. However, the whānau links of each character mean that there is constant reference to a reality beyond what we see. Tini’s father arrives from his kāinga to help his daughter overcome her grief, musician Stevie has just returned from a European tour and Quinn goes to his cousin’s house for counsel.

In the episode Tx 27.4.2007, a turning point in the plot is precipitated outdoors in Māia’s sunny garden. Here her cousin Quinn works with his good hand, tending the plants, weeding, and reconnecting with nature. Māia gives Quinn the ‘tough love’ that he needs, forcing him into action: “There’s nothing better for grief than getting your hands in the soil... He whakatau mauri te mahi māra/ Gardening soothes the soul [Gardening settles your mauri/life force].” “Koirā te kī a ō tāua pakeke/ That’s what our elders always said.” Māia makes the nurturing link between earth and people explicit: “Anei tāku mō Papatūānuku/ This is my perception of Papatūānuku. If ever you have a problem, and providing you ask her of course, she often provides the solution.” Indeed, after some time working in the garden, Quinn is ready to share his secret burden with Māia, and face up to his feelings of guilt over Hone’s death. Whilst it is customary in soap opera for characters to unburden themselves to one another, it is interesting to note the way in which Māori cultural norms are foregrounded in the process here. Quinn seeks advice of his whānau (rather than his girlfriend) and only after he allows Papatūānuku to help him can he finally confide in Māia.

### *Reo [language]*

Cinco Cine have found interesting solutions to the double challenge of creating drama in a minority language, and of producing a language-learning series which is neither boring nor patronising to its viewers. The solution to the challenge of providing linguistic instruction in an engaging way is achieved by the use of drama. The solution to the problem of a non-fluent audience being able to follow the narrative is to use te reo in conjunction with bilingual subtitles, visual cues and in partnership with English phrases. The aim is always to depict the use of the language as natural, and in general, the reo of *Ākina* is contemporary and conversational<sup>82</sup>. There is deliberate mixing with English. Often this feels macaronic, as though the writers are making sure learners can follow the story through listening alone, without recourse to the English subtitles. Indeed, if there is not lexical redundancy, the message is often made clear by the actors' performance in gestures or facial expressions. This lightens the burden for the learner. For example, when Hariata snaps at her sister: "Here, māu tonu ō kai e hoko mai ['You buy your food yourself'], it's about time you started contributing around here", the message is also communicated non-verbally as she hands Wiki the shopping list. In this way, the learning process becomes integrated with the experience of watching a dramatic scene.

It is not unusual for characters to respond in te reo to an English question – or for both languages to be used within one sentence. In the super-modern clean kitchen, artistically-arranged fruit bowl and plant in the background, the inhabitants Pare and Stevie muse over Quinn's absence:

"Kua haere kē a Quinn ki a tō Māia. He needs whānau support I suppose."

[Quinn went to Māia's house instead. He needs family support I suppose]

Subtitles: 'Quinn's gone to Māia's'

Here, Pare responds to Stevie's English question in te reo and English. Her use of the Māori word 'whānau' in the second sentence is not translated in the subtitles, because this is now a common word in New Zealand English. This example shows how a similar message is conveyed using both languages. The first sentence tells us exactly where Quinn is, and we may employ background cultural knowledge to surmise the reason for this. The second sentence tells us what Quinn is looking for, and we may thus assume that he has gone to see a family member in pursuit of this support. So, even if the learner viewer misses the semantic load of the te reo sentence, the English scaffold afterwards helps to fill the gap. The choice of which language to use depends partly on the structures which are being practised in that episode, but also on dramatic verisimilitude. Quinn's emotional revelation moves between te reo and English: "Nōku te hē, Māia. [It's my fault, Māia] I killed Hone. He was my best friend in the world and I killed him." Perhaps to distance himself from the horrible reality, he uses his second language. We assume te reo is the cousins' first language, for although they could be accustomed to using a mix in all situations, the preference of the guest

character Māia is clearly for te reo. She speaks proportionally more reo than English than Quinn in their shared scenes in this episode.

As the series attempts to get closer to real-life language use and interaction, a wide range of registers is covered, and the living language becomes manifest. It is interesting to note in this context that vulgar expressions are taught on *Ākina* – a colloquial feature which is not often to be found in language learning materials, and for which learners usually rely on real-life experiences to pick up. However, for a minoritised language, there are few real-life situations in which a learner might hear such phrases, because most public expressions of the language use a formal and ‘correct’ register<sup>83</sup>. The soap opera format makes such ejaculations normal, putting them in a real-life context, e.g. Hariata retorts “Tō tero”/ ‘Up yours’ [lit. your hole] to Wiki’s insistent badgering of her to buy a gym membership. Whilst recounting his nightmares, Quinn exclaims the strong swear word “Pōkokohua!” which is rendered rather coyly in the English subtitles as ‘\*%&@!’ Another interesting characteristic of minoritised language use is that where many people do not understand it, curse words somehow appear less powerful than the ubiquitous English versions. Also, as O’Connell points out “degrees of vulgarity acceptable in oral discourse can be perceived as more offensive when transferred through subtitles into a written code” (O’Connell, 2000: 4). To write an English swear word could be offensive, whereas to utter a Māori swear word seems to be acceptable. The veiled subtitle in this episode allows the Māori word to maintain its mystique – but it is clear from the context that the word is a serious one<sup>84</sup>.

*Kōrero Mai* was chosen as an example of a programme which was appealing and accessible to both fluent and non-fluent speakers of te reo Māori. It also provides a useful insight into how Māori Television were engaging with and adding to the image of the language during the five years the series was broadcast. As *Kōrero Mai* was scheduled in the privileged primetime position almost every evening, we may assume that it was considered important to the channel in terms both of attracting an audience and of presenting a certain image. This image emphasises new urban settings, young characters (many of whom have well-remunerated jobs) and yet also demonstrates a respect for and adherence to tikanga, in its treatment of older characters and relation to whānaungatanga. The acting style remains realistic as befits the genre, although a greater proportion of the *Ākina* characters are more decent and kind than perhaps is the case in many soap operas. Whilst the language is used in informal settings and ranges over several registers, it is always presented as clear and correct. Although sometimes the dialogue is slowed down by its attention to enunciation and linguistic accuracy, the series is nonetheless credible as a soap opera.

The mingling of dramatic scenes and studio inserts with direct address to camera leads the viewer in and out of the suspension of disbelief required to follow the narrative. Two modes of viewing are demanded by *Kōrero Mai* - one with the head (listening out for phrases and noting them down) and

the other with the heart (identifying or empathising with the dilemmas of the characters). Such polyvalent viewing, when placed in the domestic zone of television viewing, becomes strangely compelling. The entertaining quality of the series makes the learning of te reo an accessible and non-threatening experience for non-fluent speakers. In *Kōrero Mai*, Cinco Cine has married the strengths of the television medium to their purpose of presenting the language and aspects of its culture to an audience who may not otherwise have had such access.

### 3.3 Singing Programmes - *Mōteatea* and *Abair Amhrán*

*Bíonn dhá insint ar scéal agus dhá leagan déag ar amhrán*

[There are two sides to every story, and twelve versions of every song]

Māori Television and TG4 each broadcast a traditional singing series which forgoes common televisual framing devices in favour of a less formal presentation of 'live' performance, and assumes some cultural knowledge on the part of the audience. *Mōteatea* (Māori Television) and *Abair Amhrán* (TG4) use televisual conventions and forms to engage with an older oral culture, and to draw the audience into the 'space' where the song is being transmitted. The programmes invoke a sense of place and community on screen in an attempt to convey the original context and integrity of the song. Central to this is the refamiliarisation of the indigenous language, or the recognition of the language as real and present in the lives of the viewers. *Abair Amhrán* and *Mōteatea* demonstrate some of the ways in which a television station may interact with a continuous tradition of live performance<sup>85</sup>, providing a broader platform for traditional singers and new composers, as well as introducing a new audience to each song using visuals and contextual explanations.

In the oral tradition, the human being is "umbilicus mundi" (Hederman, 2005), and in order for any real development to be effected, the human being in his or her community must be taken as the starting point. Even if viewing figures for TG4 and Māori Television suggest that cultural outsiders take a great interest in their programming, and even if the channels provide an alternative perspective on the country as a whole, the priority remains the (re)imagining of the culture of their gcróíphobail [core audiences]. The first step is to develop respect for the worldview of the minoritised group, as well as respect for the language. Both of these are encapsulated in the continuous cultural tradition of *mōteatea* (Māori) and *sean nós* [old style] (Irish). A particular voice or voices are being put forward by Māori Television and TG4 on a broader basis than before - voices which link to the past, and exist firmly in the present, voices which reach other people, voices which question and reinterpret. There is a continuous musical culture in both the Irish language and te reo Māori, despite change and attempts to break the tradition through the years of cultural imperialism<sup>86</sup>. As Lillis Ó Laoire explains in the Irish context:

A highly developed appreciation of music and song often forms an integral part of this world view and, indeed... the performance of songs and dances ... celebrated community and

created a continuity between the living and the dead, between those absent and those present. (Ó Laoire, 2000)

However, today the songs are known well only in certain regions, as the essential method of passing them on involves face to face teaching or frequent exposure to good performers. Only in areas where the language and culture are strong can this process occur naturally, and as discussed in Chapter 1, such areas are now few. The purpose of each song in the sean nós and mōteatea traditions is to transmit a story, express deep cultural concerns (Moloney, 2006: 124-5) or to pass on a memory. In both traditions, the lyrics are more important than the air, and in each, there are certain ways of emphasising important words Irish singers effect this with melismatic ornamentation or pauses, and Māori performers with movement, which in itself constitutes another layer of signification.

### ***Abair Amhrán and Mōteatea***

The programmes *Abair Amhrán* (Forefront Productions) and *Mōteatea* (Raukatauri Productions) speak to an audience who have some knowledge of the songs, but who might not know all the words or meanings. They also showcase the talent and virtuosity of those singers who perform the songs on screen- although in the case of both programmes, the song is more important than the singer. The purpose of the programmes is to carry on story and song, translating them into a new medium and also into a societal context where many people live dispersed, apart from their original communities.

The TG4 website sums up the purpose of *Abair Amhrán*, targeting it at an audience who are familiar with the songs from youthful experience:

Caithfimid súil siar ar amhráin is cuimhin linn ónár n-óige, amhráin a bhíodh á gcanadh ag ár muintir agus a tháinig anuas ó ghlúin go glúin. [We take a look back at songs we remember from our youth, songs our people used to sing and that were handed down from generation to generation] ([www.tg4.ie](http://www.tg4.ie))

*Abair Amhrán* ran for three seasons, as a six-part entertainment series, ending in 2006. Shot on location all over Ireland, it features popular traditional songs, mostly in Irish, but occasionally in English, that were handed down in the folk tradition. Well-respected and emerging singers perform in a relaxed environment, either *a capella* or with musical accompaniment. There is no presenter, so that the songs and the singers speak for themselves. Musical continuity is achieved through bridging and a sense of growing momentum is evoked by the taking up of the same melody (sometimes in another key) by various singers around the country.

*Mōteatea* began in 2004 on Māori Television, and has been broadcast for seven series (13 half-hour episodes), presenting performances of waiata from many regions around the country. It is a

presentation of traditional songs without instrumental accompaniment and explanation of their meaning. The songs are performed by individuals or by groups, often with a bisected screen providing lyrics. Usually serious in tone, *Mōteatea* is a celebration and a memory of important songs from particular rohe and iwi. *Mōteatea* is seen by Reweti as an “excellent case of tikanga – [merging] traditional arts and television technology” (2006: 186). Both programmes broadcast at prime time on weekday evenings, drawing favourable responses from the viewing public.

Although the performances of the songs in *Abair Amhrán* and *Mōteatea* are rehearsed, they are ‘almost as live’, and the singing of the songs constitutes a communication of information. The performance appears to be ‘live’ on the level of performance, in the singer’s awareness of the camera, and also on an affective level, in the singer’s felt relation to the song. Nonetheless, obvious differences occur between live performance and the recording of songs for a television programme. In natural performance, the songs emerge organically from the gathering. For television, the songs are chosen in advance by the production company (in consultation with chosen singers)<sup>87</sup>, and the format of presentation is approved by the broadcaster and the funding body. Unlike traditional performance of *mōteatea* or *sean nós*, on television the setting is more or less staged, and elements of teaching and performance are mixed. Traditionally, teaching occurred either separately (to a group of youngsters) or was allowed to happen implicitly (learners would listen and gradually pick up the words and meaning from live performance), and the performance of songs was generally for sheer enjoyment and sharing particular stories with the assembled company (Ó Laoire, 2005: 125)<sup>88</sup>. In order to approximate the atmosphere of these live sessions on television, the producers use televisual techniques to draw in a distant audience.

### **Place**

George Steiner has observed that, following colonisation, “It can happen that a civilisation can be imprisoned in a linguistic contour which no longer matches the landscape of fact” (Steiner, 1985: 47). This ‘imprisonment’ can happen, and has happened, but as long as the indigenous language persists it is never irrevocable. For native speakers who refuse to be displaced the initial connection between word and world remains alive<sup>89</sup>. This connection is reasserted, and remade for learners of the language. Bachelard refers to such as “a really inhabited space” (Bachelard, 1994, cited by Ó Laoire, 2005: 283). The metaphoric or actual connection between language and place is well illustrated in the tradition of Aboriginal songlines, but the idea of language or words as lines on a map representing hills and valleys of an underlying landscape of reality is now being brought to new life as television becomes a virtual space in which tradition may sing.

The opening sequence of *Mōteatea* links people and place through music. On the faces of several people are projected topographical graphics, contours like rippling water, as a background to the lyrics. With a low pulsing beat, the sung lyrics sustain a mood of calmness. Between the old and

peaceful faces is shadow. The camera appears to be a static witness of the movement from face to darkness to new face. Dark eyes are, as in icons, the focal point of the shot, even as the faces seem to slide slowly out of frame. This conveys a sense of the intangible, as curved lines glide over skin and remain unbroken until the next face. The movement of the images evokes a sense of how ephemeral human existence can be, whilst the continuous lyrics denote the power of song to carry values on from one person to the next<sup>90</sup>. The people create the song, but the song is greater than any one person.

In the opening sequence of *Abair Amhrán*, juxtaposition conveys the link between people and place. A wide variety of people and places appear in fast-paced montage before the viewer, shown by unusual camera angles, lighting and tempo, and edited with suturing dissolves, musical bridges and inventive cuts. The geographical and compositional origins of the featured songs span a wide range, indicating the breadth of the programme's content. Whilst a range of voices are to be heard, most have been modified (slowed-down, added echo) so that the mix is perceived as a whole. The fast rhythm of the edit links disparate places and voices, and a continuous drum beat holds the sequence together, building to crescendo. The shape of the sequence is oval - we are drawn in, given a glimpse of the possibilities this music can offer, and then the candle burns out, spent. We have a moment to take a breath before the actual episode begins.

*Abair Amhrán* is set mostly out of doors, amongst important features of the Irish landscape, and usually the place we see on screen is linked to the singer (indeed the location was mainly decided "on the road" (McCarthy, e-mail 2009)) or to the content of the song, as in 'Cailleach an Airgid', if not both. This means that the viewer is able to 'see' the whole country and hear the songs associated with different parts. Never does a map appear to show the relative location of the places, but often shots of signposts will indicate where the song is set. An Irish audience is expected to recognise the area. There is a mix between the domestic (people's homes) and the national (iconic and banal spots around Ireland), which make up the world of the song.

*Mōteatea*, in contrast, is shot overwhelmingly in studio, and singers from all over the motu [country] converge in the Newmarket HQ of Māori Television to record their song<sup>91</sup>. In a black box studio, a singer or group of singers, often wearing black, stand barefoot or in stockinged feet on a wooden floor. The absence of shoes signals a marae-type setting. This atmosphere implies an audience ready to listen and feel part of the performance, and creates a link to the 'space' of Māori culture. The studio provides a neutral venue for multiple iwi, and indeed evokes a more positive spiritual 'no place': Te Kore, the origin of all creativity. The connection to geographical place is evoked through the words of the singer who explains the song. Their iwi (which appears as a strapline on screen) often gives a clue to location for a culturally-literate audience. The appropriateness of setting and song is vital to a culturally consonant performance. The composer



Rob Ruha's (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui) explanation of his song 'E rere rā te mātihetihe' shows how his personal lament is rooted in place, in this case, the farm Matakao in Wharekahika, where he used to love lying in the long grasses (mātihetihe/ pātiti). At the beginning of this *mōteatea*, we see an exterior shot, before returning to the studio, where the uncle mourns the loss of his nephew in song.

### ***People/ relationship***

*He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.*

[What is the most important thing in the world? It is people.]

Both *Mōteatea* and *Abair Amhrán* represent a range of generations, because this is vital to any understanding of how these songs work. They must be alive between different age groups<sup>92</sup>. In *Abair Amhrán*, families or teachers and students sing together - a living example of how to effect intergenerational transmission as set out by Ó Laoire (2005: 225, 271-2). The viewers at home also benefit from witnessing - if not participating - in the process. Generations are mentioned again and again in *Mōteatea*, sometimes in the context of composition and how the song was handed down, and sometimes in the context of reception, and how the purpose of the song is to educate and encourage future generations. In both traditions, music and dance "retain their power for every generation... [and] continue to be imaginatively relevant in periods of dramatic social and cultural change" (Moloney, 2006: 135).

An important feature of the singing tradition in both cultures is that the audience is generally close (physically and relationally) to the performer. The audience may also become performer, as the roles are not rigid. In *Abair Amhrán*, the audience is 'translated' to screen by means of friends or family members of the singer, who act as 'stand-ins' for the viewer. As in *Mōteatea*, the viewers are linked to what they see and hear firstly by the songs themselves and secondly by their knowledge of the story. For people who are unfamiliar with the song, they first must experience it - the performance, the *ihi* the *wehi*, the spirit. Marcia Browne, following Hunkin (2005) remarks that *ihihangaranga* [weaving of spiritual power through feeling a sonar vibration of the *waiata*] is a phenomenon experienced through the performance of good singers, whereby the *wairua* or spiritual power of the song is communicated to the listeners (Browne, 2005: 27). This 'x-factor' (Browne, 2005: 27, 42) makes a connection beyond words<sup>93</sup>. A similar deep response obtains in the Irish context, as expressed by Dick Roche:

It's part of what we are. When I hear a song in Irish, to my shame, I don't understand it... but when I hear that song, it resonates. It makes me want to - cry is the wrong word - but it does make me feel emotional. (Roche, on Ireland AM, 2009)

As the listeners experience the song, they may then accumulate some knowledge (through thinking themselves, or through explicit instruction by the singer or composer) and listen again, making a stronger connection to the meaning of the song<sup>94</sup>. In this way, the television broadcast of traditional

singing assists viewers in the process of reacquainting themselves with a half-known/ half-forgotten language, reconnecting, or in a process of refamiliarisation. This term is particularly apt in the context of song programmes, because it doesn't insist on actual use of or ability in the language, but rather on the quality of relationship the person has with it<sup>95</sup>.

The difference in presentation of the context and meaning of the songs in *Mōteatea* and *Abair Amhrán* reflects the ethos of their respective broadcasters. Where Māori Television is concerned to convey a sense of an organised knowledge and tradition long-neglected in the New Zealand public arena, TG4 seeks to avoid connotations of the schoolroom, preferring to emphasise the entertainment aspect of the service<sup>96</sup>. The camera in *Abair Amhrán* is presented as incidental, whereas in *Mōteatea* it takes on a formal framing role. In both programmes, the singers may speak about their song, before or after a performance, in an explanatory sequence which contextualises the song in question, its history, its original composer or famous performer. Never is the singer so foregrounded. The provenance of a song, “the succession of singers and carriers... the changes and metamorphoses the song has undergone in its travels” (Dorgan, 2006: 28) is an important part of oral history. In *Mōteatea* most performances are introduced in this way, and some also repeat particular verses after the explanation has been given, which gives the audience a chance to reconsider the meaning of the song in the light of what they have learned. Neither programme uses a presenter as intermediary between the songs/singers and the audience, resulting in a relatively direct connection.

It is very important to get the song ‘right’. Lillis Ó Laoire refers to ‘an chuma cheart’, or the right shape/ form/ appearance (2005: 92, 125, 284) and mentions that the old people would be severe in their criticism of a young singer who makes an error (Ó Laoire, 2005: 94-5). Probably the most contentious decision in the production of *Abair Amhrán* was the way that many songs were ‘interrupted’ by switching from one singer to another. If the intention of the producer was to show a continuity of tradition across different ages and areas, some “purists did not like the style of breaking up songs with chat and getting different performers singing the same songs” (McCarthy, e-mail 2009), because they saw it as disrespectful to the personal interpretations of the individual singers.

In *Mōteatea*, performance is explicitly mentioned and shown as important. Different gestures and pūkana [facial expressions of wairua being released] convey further layers of meaning to the singing. As Tau puts it, there is a gulf between ‘knowing’ a song and actually being able to interpret and communicate the song: “Knowing Apirana Ngata and Pei Jones’s *Ngā Mōteatea* is one feat; being able to perform and interpret mōteatea in a way that has meaning to both the community and the composition is something altogether different” (Tau, 2001: 68). In fact, the television series was conceived as a means of interacting with the live tradition. The performers and singers saw the

programme as “an important way to carry on the tradition of these waiata and for people to learn more about the traditions specific to their iwi” (Mohi, e-mail 2010). When a group perform, their actions are not always in unison, as the performers have interpretative room to respond to the lyrics in their own way: “one’s body movements... represent forms of thought in a language that exceeds the rest” (Tau, 2001: 69). However, although the full meaning of the *mōteatea* may only be apprehended through the holistic experience, many people believe that the words have primacy. According to Ngaringi Walker, introducing a song on screen, “Ko te reo te tuatahi” [The language is the most important element]<sup>97</sup>.

### Language

In *Mōteatea*, the lyrics of the songs appear on screen as the group performs in unison, enabling a viewer to join in at home. The te reo lyrics begin as white font on a violet to black background, which becomes transparent to reveal the singers. This visual pas de deux makes the singers and lyrics appear as one and evokes layers of whakapapa. There is explanation direct to camera of a song’s context or significance, which means that although the lyrics are not translated, a non-Māori-speaker may still appreciate the gist of the content. Hinewehi Mohi describes her rationale for making the series:

I’d had the idea for quite a few years; at first I was looking to make it into a radio programme but could see that benefit of including the words onscreen so people could learn them as they heard the waiata being sung. I knew it would be a wonderful resource for students of the reo and for helping with the revival of these old songs and the beautiful poetry used. (Mohi, e-mail 2010)

*Abair Amhrán* does not show the lyrics of the songs visually, but occasionally a singer will comment on the meaning of a particular line. Unlike *Mōteatea*, in *Abair Amhrán* the viewer thus has no possibility of singing along unless he or she already knows the song (as many Irish people would)<sup>98</sup>. However, the air of the songs and the constantly moving visuals breathe life into what for some might otherwise be an inaccessible cultural artefact. A viewer can appreciate other features of the song (melody, performance, accompanying images and juxtapositions) without knowing the literal meaning of the words. This is also an important element of the oral tradition - sometimes meaning emerges later. It is important to note that, despite glosses and explanations, the meaning of the song is still never fully explicit. This is not because of a wish to conceal, or a failure to reveal on the part of the singers or the programme-makers, but rather due to the character of the tradition. Only part of the meaning of the song can be conveyed (whether by television or in live performance), because part of the interpretative work lies with the listener. The song must be taken inside and be re-sung by another person, who in the experience of that performance can discover the story or greater significance<sup>99</sup>.

Although a recognition of the centrality of song to the culture, the creation of a genre (a series devoted to traditional singing) perhaps risks corraling the tradition by separating it from its

context. Performance inevitably changes to accommodate the camera, the set and the expectations of the production company. On television, intergenerational connection is represented and seen rather than experienced and felt. However, there are ways in which these 'distances' are overcome. The approaches taken by the production companies demonstrate respect for the tradition<sup>100</sup>, even as they modify the performance context for the purposes of television.

Both *Abair Amhráin* and *Mōteatea* convey a sense of layers of meaning on and beyond the screen in their treatment of the songs, singers and setting. The absence of a presenter leaves the content open to more dynamic interpretation on the part of the viewer. Even whilst drawing on traditional song, these programmes, like the others analysed here, insist on the place of the minority language in the contemporary world. The journey of the artistic material featured in both programmes provides a mirror for the position of the Irish and Māori languages today. In the beginning, these songs were solely about place or people (emotion and information). Now, on television in the post-colonial era, they are also about language. They are a new way of passing on the craft and the words to the next generation. In an episode of *Abair Amhrán*, the singer Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin says that the best way to pass on a song is for children to pick it up naturally rather than to 'learn' it formally. These programmes therefore see television taking on the role of seanacháí [storyteller] or tohunga [expert]. In presenting traditional songs on screen, the Māori *Mōteatea* and Irish *Abair Amhrán* draw on the power of a continuous oral tradition to create a new relationship between people and their language and culture. The creative potential of the minoritised culture is here presented and reimagined on its own terms. Tradition is reinvented as the song moves from live performance to the 'as live' medium of television. The spirit of the language is the current which runs through singer and song, an electrifying relationship between traditional and contemporary identity.

## Conclusion

All the programmes examined in this section aim to represent natural use of the indigenous national language, avoiding symbolic or highly formal registers. This portrays an image of a living, flexible and inventive language, connected to people and place at a deep level. *Mōteatea* consciously sets out to envelop the viewer/listener in a richness of sound, the elements of which are then mediated for an audience without the requisite cultural background. Although *Ákina* is designed as a language-learning drama, it manages to avoid invasive didacticism in favour of engaging storylines. Whereas *Aifric* creates a self-contained and attractive world where Irish is the norm, *Abair Amhráin* shows people from different parts of the country speaking and singing fluently in Irish and English, without drawing attention to the difference. In both cases, the image of Irish is as something natural and part of the daily lives of the characters or contributors.

For most viewers, however, the use of the indigenous national language in these programmes remains a salient feature. The knowledge of this possible audience reaction, bearing in mind the

complex relationship people have with their language due to historical shift and reclamation, affects the way the production companies approach the commission. In *Ākina* and *Aifric*, the scripts were written and planned with the utmost care and attention, and language advisors oversaw the realisation of the story on set.

This sensitivity to the presentation of the language is at the root of the difference between ‘mainstream’ genres and the programmes mentioned here. The striking presence and image of the language pervades all phases of the production, from conception to realisation on screen. Taking a textual approach provides a richer picture of te reo and Irish as living languages, showing them as expressive and exploratory agents rather than as articles of purely archival value. Television texts which draw on the respective cultures of these languages (as well as external influences) have multiple layers. The language and its associated culture and perspective on life afford producers an alternative approach to making television programmes, which often may also become manifest on screen. A viewer of a programme in Irish or te reo takes in more than just the narrative – there is also a sense of the spirit of the language, animated by its culture. Indeed, the indigenous national language may carry on the values of its associated culture even when the programme-makers have not set out to foreground such elements. The selection of programmes analysed here begin to reveal how aspects of tradition may be carried on and given a new home in an extended range of settings. They also show how conventional narrative and generic forms, as developed through television, can be adapted to manifest the values and concerns of indigenous national communities.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted here that in general, TG4 is less ‘indigenous’ and more eclectic than Māori Television in terms of its acquisitions. This is partly to do with differences in outlook, and also because of the larger schedule TG4 has to fill. It runs for almost 24 hours a day, whereas Māori Television broadcasts for about eight hours per day (as of 2010).

<sup>2</sup> “Níl muid ag iarraidh a bheith macasamhail de RTÉ nó UTV nó TV3 as Gaeilge. Tá muid ag iarraidh seirbhis a chur ar fáil a bhfuil dúchasach agus difriúil [we’re not trying to be an Irish-language version of RTÉ or UTV or TV3. We’re trying to provide a service that is indigenous and different] (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2008).

<sup>3</sup> A contested term, post-colonial is here taken in the sense preferred by scholar David Lloyd: “The ‘post’ in post-colonial refers not to the passing of colonialism but to the vantage point of critiques which are aimed at freeing up the processes of decolonisation from the inhibiting effects of a nationalism invested in the state form” (Lloyd, 1999: 41).

<sup>4</sup> “Tikanga Māori evolve to meet the needs of the people in the times that they live” (Edwards & Stephens, 2009: 4).

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<sup>5</sup> Shohat and Stam's work on stereotypes in film refers to the "burden of representation", where a figure from a group not often seen on screen is 'burdened' with standing for all the group in the eyes of the outsiders (1994, 2003). This is similar to Memmi's conception of "the mark of the plural" (2003: 129).

<sup>6</sup> These phrases may be translated as 'for the cause' and 'friends of the Irish language', and refer to people who tended to reify the language, placing a greater emphasis on medium than message.

<sup>7</sup> Brown (2008) admits that, in his role as Head of the TVNZ Newsroom in the 1980s, he did not support Derek Fox in his attempts to develop *Te Kārerere*, the news told by Māori for Māori.

<sup>8</sup> Often the desire of eager outsiders to use Māori culture in stories (Kahi, 2008: 12), is more a wish to access 'window dressing' rather than to enter into the Māori world. Jones and Jenkins have spoken of the consequent 'white anxiety' if "the indigene is unavailable for 'sharing'" (Jones & Jenkins, 2008: 477).

<sup>9</sup> Reo and Tikanga consultant Brad Haami appeals for good faith in the creative and production process, as a means of making something real: "For me, Māori stories come from the ethos found within the inner circle of Māoridom. If you write from outside that circle, then you are looking at it the wrong way. You have to be in the middle. [You have to] find a doorway in... to these experiences" (Haami, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> The importance of showing respect to the old central to traditional Māori culture can sometimes interfere with the telling of certain stories. The writer Briar Grace Smith notes a dilemma which emerges in the case where, for whatever reason, the "grandparents [made a] conscious decision not to pass on culture" (2007).

<sup>11</sup> He remarks that for a western environment "saturated in materialistic and consumerist television, the world seems to be full of people who *want* to be on television, [but that the role of the producer is to] find people who *need* to be on television" (Somers, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> "In the Māori world, an artist traditionally guides a work of art into being, whether a carving, painting, poem or novel. Artists draw on the energies of te whaitua, active space — ancient, mysterious forces to which they have access. The work of art is viewed with reverence. It has its own mauri — its own distinctive, defining qualities" (Panny, 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Te Aroha Mane-Wheoki of TVNZ has also remarked that a large sector of the Māori audience need inspiring programmes to encourage them to take pride in their heritage: "Most of our people are poor. They recognise us as being from the television and are proud. They need programmes that are inspiring" (Mane-Wheoki, interview 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Anaru Eketone argues that Kaupapa Māori shows two different faces, one based on the practical application of cultural values, such as the manner in which kura kaupapa are run, and the other grounded in a philosophical approach related to Critical Theory (Eketone, 2008). The theory side is a counter hegemonic approach, deeply based in Maori philosophy, principles, values and practices. Whilst Eketone warns against an over-emphasis on resistance because it risks defining Māori interests purely in terms of being 'anti-' something else, most writers are in agreement that the primary focus is to "advance as Māori using our own knowledge, values and processes" (Eketone, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> Kapa also notes that according to tikanga, if a mistake is made in something, "you'd be reminded when you were finished. On television, if you do it wrong, you just start again. You could do it three or four times" (interview 2010).

<sup>16</sup> There are some, however, who favour a less schedule-driven template for the stations, which would draw more deeply on indigenous cultural norms (Rickit, 2009).

<sup>17</sup> Niall Mac Eachmharaigh, a Gaeltacht writer and producer, preferred the early programmes on TnaG, with "blas na Gaeltachta orthu" [the Gaeltacht 'flavour'] in contrast to what he sees as today's over-emphasis on "luacha léiriúcháin" [production values] (2008: 163).

<sup>18</sup> Michael D. Higgins (interview 2001) speaks about 'texture' in relation to the use of images and atmosphere in Irish films.

<sup>19</sup> For Turner, this form of expression emerges from the experience of "broken history" (of continuity having been broken as a result of settlement by another people). In the New Zealand context, Maori expression is informed not so much by visual distinctiveness (although this may also be present) as by a different sense of what is. A programme which truly engages with this whakapapa has, in Turner's phrase, "resonant opacity" (e-mail 2009).

<sup>20</sup> Waititi explores "how the exterior filming process can affect the inner essence or interiority of a Māori film. The aim is to link Māori philosophies such as whakapapa (genealogy) to the outer processes of creating a film and the inner essence (wairua) that results from these surface processes" (Waititi, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> The comedy series *CU Burn* is often cited as an example in this regard: "aimsíodh guth firinneach Gaeltachta" [a true Gaeltacht voice has been found] (Goan, 2008: 22).

<sup>22</sup> "Maori tikanga is implemented when interviewing talent [for TVNZ]. The most basic is to mihi to [greet] talent, before the cameras roll, and to be prepared to give koha [a donation], be sensitive when speaking of the dead and ensure your research of the story is correct" (Mane-Wheoki, interview 2010).

<sup>23</sup> "This means that the responsibility of the documentary-maker is greater, and the consequences of misrepresentation are wider" (Waititi, 2006).

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<sup>24</sup> Reflecting on her own practice, Waititi notes that “applying these kaupapa Māori processes helped to create a space that allowed people to share their experiences more easily, [giving] their stories an essence that otherwise would not be captured” (Waititi, 2008).

<sup>25</sup> The blending of cultural and commercial knowledges is often achieved by placing Māori producers with Pākehā production companies to make programmes for TVNZ (Graham, 2009). However, when the cultural ‘expert’ is in a minority, tikanga can easily be compromised, because the producer is driving the project (Berryman, interview 2007).

<sup>26</sup> Stephens also works as Kaitiaki for New Zealand on Air. This organisation, which before the coming of Te Māngai Pāho distributed funding for all programmes relating to Māori culture or language, has held a series of hui attempting to define the meaning of a ‘Māori programme’ and the working relation between producer and cultural or reo consultant. “There is also growing awareness that to involve any Maori community, or certain individuals, or specific content in a production there are usually requirements to demonstrate knowledge of reo and tikanga” (NZoA website, 2009; Usmar, e-mail 2009). In August 2000, NZ On Air launched a new strategy - Te Rautaki Māori - aiming to enhance the on-screen outcomes of mainstream Māori programming for television, and to improve the broadcast experience for Māori practitioners through better consultation and communication. This included the appointment of Te Kai Urungi [Guide], Tainui Stephens, to mentor Māori practitioners. This strategy was most recently updated in June 2008.

<sup>27</sup> In New Zealand, this means iwi; and in Ireland, this means pobail na Gaeilge, especially na Gaeltachta.

<sup>28</sup> Alan Esslemont of BBC ALBA reflects that most MLM outlets “work within the grammar of our audiences and those audiences inform and entertain themselves almost solely through the eyes of anglophone television” (Esslemont, e-mail 2010).

<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, TG4 has since 2008 been encouraging companies to “submit proposals for longer running series [and to] broaden the range of genres within their submissions” (TG4 Treoirínte Coimisiúnaithe, 2010). Such a move brings the attendant risk of developing big companies at the expense of the smaller ones (Ó Scolaí, 2001).

<sup>30</sup> Of the 10 featured shows in the youth slot ‘PONC’, at least five are from America, one from Australia (*H2O Just add Water*) and two from Ireland (*Aifric* and *POP 4*) ([www.tg4.ie/claracha](http://www.tg4.ie/claracha)). The sports programme *Red Bull X Fighters* and the Canadian animation *Total Drama Island* are dubbed into Irish.

<sup>31</sup> The success of programmes which do not depend much on language (sport, music, art, travel) also means that non-fluent viewers can stay in a comfort zone where their language skills are not stretched (Ó hÍfearnáin, 2008: 93-4). Te Rito is also concerned that reaching out too far to non-speakers by using subtitling will dilute the viewing experience for fluent speakers of te reo: “Bringing in the rest of the world is not necessarily everything... I think there is a danger for making our own Māori people lazy and not learning” (Te Rito, interview 2006).

<sup>32</sup> The television panel format has spawned new uses on TG4, where the storytelling competition *Aon Scéal* showcases “the wit and wordplay” of the Irish language (TG4, 2008: 23/5) and on Māori Television, where *Whatukura Mareikura* and *Whatukura* (Māui Productions, 2008-9) have followed in the footsteps of the original agony aunt-style show *Ask Your Aunty* (Greenstone Pictures, 2006-9). In these programmes, a panel acting as older and wiser whānau members respond to viewers’ personal problems.

<sup>33</sup> Such humour is seen in the juxtaposition of *Ros na Rún* and *Nip/Tuck* in TG4 advertising: “Na Drámaí is fearr. The Best Irish and American dramas together ar TG4” ([www.tg4.ie](http://www.tg4.ie)).

<sup>34</sup> Pádraic Ó Raighne explains the unlikely coincidence that made this promo possible: someone in the publicity agency QMP knew that John Finn (the American actor from *Cold Case*) attended Irish-language courses in Oideas Gael every year (Ó Raighne, interview 2008).

<sup>35</sup> Television critic Liam Fay notes that the shortage of fluent ‘talking heads’ on current affairs programmes in the Irish language has resulted in an “unusually high degree of resourcefulness and imagination... [in] finding original ways of conveying information and differing opinions”(Fay, 2000).

<sup>36</sup> This mentality has also led to Te Reo channel’s dual broadcasting for short periods each day alongside Māori Television, as discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>37</sup> This was the case in both countries, where news was the first genre to be broadcast consistently in the indigenous language (*Nuacht* in Ireland and *Te Kārere* in New Zealand) as a basic starting point for a public forum or public sphere where various perspectives are enabled. The funding agency Te Māngai Pāho currently classes “tamariki and rangatahi [children and youth] targeted programmes” as “priority genres” (TMP, SOI 2005-8: 24).

<sup>38</sup> Tom Moring notes two types of ‘completeness’ necessary for minority language broadcasting to be effective. These are “institutional completeness” (full range of media- print, television, radio), such as in the case of the Welsh, Basque, and Catalan services (Moring, 2007: 19) and “functional completeness” (“actual use, among minority speakers, of media in their own language” (Moring, 2007: 30) or in other words, normalisation of these media). The question is one of media availability or provision and their relation to language use. Moring’s terms deal with media form and its possible effect. To these I would like to add the idea of generic completeness, or issues of content within the media outlet.

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<sup>39</sup> In fact, many MLM broadcasters do not take genre as a starting point. Alan Esslemont (formerly of TG4 and now Ceannard Phrògraman / Head of Content for BBC ALBA) comments: "Looking at television through the perspective of genres (or a production focus) is not what we normally do. We try to look at how we can serve various audiences with the resources we have" (Esslemont, 2010).

<sup>40</sup> There is often a shortage of indigenous drama due to budgetary considerations. According to the Niensens figures, the top five TG4 genres in order of popularity were: live sport, documentary, music, drama and English language programming (Ó Gallchóir, interview 2007).

<sup>41</sup> One of the stakeholder submissions to the 2009 Review of the 2003 Act (NZ) remarks on the "high percentage of cheap Māori language programming" which "makes the language unattractive" (stakeholder submission to Te Kāhui o Māhutonga, 2009: 12).

<sup>42</sup> In the early years of their operation, both stations actively sought animation from alternative local sources (European countries for TG4 (O'Connell, 2007: 259) and Asian countries for Māori Television). However, for different reasons, the channels have now turned to more 'mainstream' American sources, either because the larger distributors spare the station publicity work or because the process of acquiring the broadcast rights is easier (Ní Dhálaigh, interview 2008; Schuster, interview 2010).

<sup>43</sup> A respondent to the 2009 Māori Language Attitudes Survey expressed similar concern: "I was really disturbed by some of the kids programmes. It's all just 'western' ones that are translated. They might have Māori phrases and that, but is it culturally appropriate?" (TPK, 2010: 6)

<sup>44</sup> For example, *South Park* has been dubbed into Irish for a late night audience on TG4.

Browne has nonetheless noted the 'kind' values promoted in many imported cartoons for children shown on TG4 and S4C, such as *Super Ted* and *Clifford* (Browne, 2005: 176).

<sup>45</sup> Conradh na Gaeilge and Fiontar are pressing the Irish government to guarantee no cost access to TG4 for nationally-designated "major sports events" as allowed under EU law, arguing that the use of Irish commentary on such events will augment the status of the language (Conradh na Gaeilge, 2010; Fiontar, 2009: 31).

Māori Television, as lead free-to-air broadcaster in New Zealand for the 2011 Rugby World Cup, plans 5-10% te reo content on all first broadcast matches (as well as 100% te reo commentary for the repeat screening on Te Reo channel).

<sup>46</sup> TG4 provides live coverage of the hugely popular Gaelic Games throughout the season on *GAA Beo*. A special 10-part series ran in 2009 to celebrate 125 years of the GAA (Gaelic Athletics Association).

<sup>47</sup> Whilst *Māorioko* goes to the communities around the country, *Hōmai te Pakipaki* is shot in the Auckland studios.

<sup>48</sup> For the 2010 season, the host was Mātai Smith.

<sup>49</sup> *Anamocht* is the over-arching title for a series of one-hour stand-alone treatments of "personalities, movements, places and ideas that have shaped modern Ireland or that reveal a hidden or repressed aspect of our cultural, historical or social heritage" ([www.tg4.ie/bearla/clar/anm/anm.asp](http://www.tg4.ie/bearla/clar/anm/anm.asp), 14.6.2010). Many have been co-financed by Bord Scannán na hÉireann/The Irish Film Board, the BCI *Sound and Vision* scheme, the Northern Ireland Irish Language Broadcast Fund, the EU *Media* schemes and other television broadcasters. The *Anamocht* strand has successfully engaged with well-known and lesser-known episodes from Irish history, from *Imeacht na nIarlaí [Flight of the Earls]* (Midas Productions, 2007), following the stories of the Wild Geese who fled to Europe in 1607, to *Na Redlegs* (Moondance Productions, 2009), the story of Irish slaves sent by Cromwell to Barbados where their descendents still live in poverty. These productions, demonstrating national, cross-border and international resonance, are but two examples of the calibre of independent work which has been afforded a platform on TG4.

<sup>50</sup> In 2010, international documentaries included the series *First Australians* (Rachel Perkins, with Film Australia and the Film Finance Corporation in conjunction with SBS Independent and the New South Wales Film and Television Office, 2008), *Frida Kahlo, Between Passion and Pain* (Daylights Films, 2004) and *Iraq, My Country [My Country My Country]* (Zeitgeist Films, 2005). Homegrown work in 2009-10 ranged from *Earth Race* (EarthRace, 2008) the attempt of a power boat to circumnavigate the globe to *Te Tāua Moana* (Adrenalin Group, 2009), showing the "trials and tribulations of young Māori recruits in basic training – each of their hearts set on a career with the New Zealand Navy".

<sup>51</sup> The character of 'Hector', laddish host of the *Amú* travel series, which has been running for several years, is the personification of this tendency. Hector Ó hEochagáin delights in the exotic - and yet shows respect for alternative traditions. Amongst the activities Hector has performed on screen are undergoing a smoke healing treatment with a South American shaman, towing a car with his penis and instigating a seisiún ceoil [music session] in the rainforest ('Cailleach an Airgid'). Aimed at a young audience, and very popular, the travel series covered adventure and individual discovery of things well off the beaten track or tourist trail. Hector's enthusiasm, ironic references to his home in Meath and fluent switching between Spanish and Irish attracted a new set of viewers, and increased the profile of the station among English-speakers.

<sup>52</sup> These series have been extremely popular, and there are plans for at least two more: *Kia ora Molweni* (Africa) and *Kia ora Namaste* (India), to be broadcast in 2011.



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<sup>53</sup> Māori Television shows art house films which are not often to be seen on TVNZ. TG4 however, as well as screening Irish films and films in other languages under their strand *Le Film*, frequently shows classic American films in English, (e.g. the strand *An Western*). TG4 also shows some blockbuster-type films, whereas Māori Television overwhelmingly chooses non-Hollywood content.

<sup>54</sup> *Tōku Reo* is part of a larger project, involving AUT and Dr John Moorfield's Te Whanake series of language-learning materials ([www.tokureo.maori.nz](http://www.tokureo.maori.nz) and [www.tewhanake.maori.nz](http://www.tewhanake.maori.nz)) (accessed 28.6.2010). The same materials were used as the basis for two reo-learning series on eTV in the mid-1990s with TVNZ (Moorfield, 2010: 111-3).

<sup>55</sup> In both cases, the language was presented in a traditional setting: the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in Cúl Trá near Belfast for *Ní Gaeilgeoir Mé*, and various marae for *Waka Reo*.

<sup>56</sup> For a more general overview of Irish television drama, see Helena Sheehan (2004: 58-61).

<sup>57</sup> *Rásáí na Gaillimhe* is due to be broadcast in the indigenous international drama slot on Māori Television later in 2010. Another WITBN exchange programme, *The Circuit* (Media World Pictures, Australia, 2007-9) is currently (July 2010) showing.

Commissioned by TG4, *Aifric* is funded by the Sound and Vision scheme of the BCI (Broadcasting Commission of Ireland, now the BAI), and the Regional Film and Television Fund of Bord Scannán na hEireann [the Irish Film Board], (tax incentive Section 481).

<sup>58</sup> Writer Tadhg Mac Dhonnagáin was approached by Micheál Ó Domhnaill (Head of Development for Telegael Media Group) to co-create and develop the series. The director, and former teacher, Paul Mercier has written and directed theatre and television drama, and short films in Irish and English. He moved from Dublin to Galway with his family in the early 2000s, which mirrors the situation of the de Spáinn family in the show. Other writers for the series have also written for *Ros na Rún* and *Turas Teanga* [a language-learning series for adults] inter alia (Mullin, 2008). Nationwide casting sessions were held in 2004 to find new talent for the programme (Cummins, interview 2008). After three months of auditions of over 15000 actors, those selected were brought together in Telegael for a three-week intensive training course before shooting began. The young actors began as unknowns, but are now the subject of positive comments from peers on bebo, you tube and other online fansites, e.g. "taim i ngra le maidhc..." [i'm in love with maidhc...] ([jmca89](http://jmca89), YouTube, 2008).

<sup>59</sup> Established in 1989 by RTÉ and Údarás na Gaeltachta, Telegael Media Group mostly does revoicing (in several languages, with international collaborators) and has won Emmy awards for its animation work. The success of the company demonstrates the importance of broadband and digital capacity for small-scale production houses in areas which were previously considered remote. It is built on a strong belief in abilities and competence of people from the locality.

<sup>60</sup> The vending machine 'Súnna Tortha' in the school corridor speaks to the students as Gaeilge 'ar mhaith leat rud le nithe?' [would you like something to eat?]

<sup>61</sup> The episodes 'Spáslong' (Tx 4.11.2008) and 'Aifric agus Zara' (Tx 11.11.2008) may be viewed at: [www.tg4.ie/clar/Aifric/Aifric.asp](http://www.tg4.ie/clar/Aifric/Aifric.asp) (accessed 17.1.2009).

<sup>62</sup> The main character Aifric is played by Clóna Ní Chíosain from Lucan (Dublin), whose family speak Irish at home (Butler, 2009).

<sup>63</sup> "Ní raibh muid ag iarraidh aird ar bith a tharraingt ar an nGaeilge nó ar aon chinéal teannas idir Bearla agus Gaeilge. Go dtiocfaidh an rud sin sa mbealach ar an scéal. Ag teacht salach ar an scéal" [We didn't want to draw any attention to Irish or to any kind of tension between Irish and English. That sort of thing would distract from and interfere with the story] (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010).

<sup>64</sup> Indeed, even on set between takes, the young actors sometimes spoke to each other in English (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010).

<sup>65</sup> "Bhí caint na gcarachtar bunaithe ar an ngnáthchomhrá, ach rinneadh saothrú cúramach air leis na stíleanna éagsúla cainte (Conamara, BÁC) a chur in iúl, ar mhaithe le glórtha drámatúla na gcarachtar a bheith ag teacht lena ról sa scéal [The speech of the characters was based on ordinary conversation, but we worked carefully to portray the different [regional] styles of speech (Conamara, Dublin), so that the dramatic 'voices' of the characters would play a part in the story] (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010).

<sup>66</sup> Mac Dhonnagáin recalls taking advice and suggestions on occasion from the young Máirín Ní Ghaora [native-speaking actor from Carna, who played the role of Claudia's sidekick] (Mac Dhonnagáin, interview 2010).

<sup>67</sup> The first five series were supported by Te Māngai Pāho and broadcast on Māori Television. Series 6 and 7 went to air on TV2 (TVNZ), who in 2008 commissioned 70 episodes to run over two years (Hoey, e-mail 2009; Cinco Cine, 2008).

Māori Television has now replaced *Kōrero Mai* with *Tōku Reo*, a multi-media based language-learning course which is perhaps the antithesis of its forerunner, being wholly didactic, slow-paced, and linked to pre-existing books (the highly-regarded Te Whanake series), and online learning support.

<sup>68</sup> The first season (2003) had 70 half-hour episodes - two episodes repeated twice a week, followed by the one-off revision tutorial episode, also twice a week. By 2007, the series had grown to 120 episodes - three episodes once per week (each repeated once).

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<sup>69</sup> The series attracted a loyal viewership ([www.throng.co.nz](http://www.throng.co.nz)), and was a finalist in the Qantas media awards Information category in 2004, and winner in the Best Maori Programme category in 2005.

<sup>70</sup> *Kaitangata Twitch* was joint funded by Te Māngai Pāho, New Zealand On Air and Māori Television (TMP, 2008-9: 8). Te Māngai Pāho funded the project \$40,350 for script development and \$15,505 for advanced script development (Television Funding Decisions 2007-8, [www.tmp.govt.nz/applications/applications.html](http://www.tmp.govt.nz/applications/applications.html) (accessed 15.6.2010); and New Zealand on Air funded the project \$3,600,000 (NZoA August 2008).

<sup>71</sup> *Kaitangata Twitch* won the Platinum Award, (top prize) at the 2010 WorldFest in Houston in the Children's and Family Television Series category. It was also selected as a finalist in the Prix Jeunesse awards (in the fiction category for 7-11 year-olds) in 2010. The series has also been sold to networks in Canada, Sweden and Australia.

<sup>72</sup> The production house Cinco Cine, owned by Nicole Hoey (Ngāti Kahu, Te Aupouri), was originally set up in 1987 to make television commercials, but over the last ten years, the focus of the company has shifted to producing drama, documentary and children's television programmes (Cinco Cine, 2008).

<sup>73</sup> In 2005 the renowned actor Rawiri Paratene was a writer/director for the series.

<sup>74</sup> In post-production, the consultant checked the final cut for language correctness, and also supervised any necessary ADR (Hoey, e-mail 2010).

<sup>75</sup> Because there is a limited range of social domains in which a minority language is heard, it is more useful to learners to have phrases and expressions for conversational and intimate use (e.g. an expletive to express frustration and anger) than to be able to politely request two kilos of tomatoes at the market.

<sup>76</sup> Hōne Edwards was working for Cinco Cine at the time, and identified that the new Māori Television channel would need a language learning show. The team wanted a programme that "could not be didactic" (Hoey, e-mail 2009). As statistics showed Māori viewers enjoyed the soap *Shortland Street* (TVNZ), Nicole Hoey (Ngāti Kahu, Te Aupouri) decided on a soap format. The idea of the tutorial episode came from Alison Carter (Hoey, e-mail 2009).

<sup>77</sup> Piripi Taylor is also a newsreader for *Te Kāea* on Māori Television. When *Kōrero Mai* moved to TVNZ, it took on different presenters: Mātai Smith (of *Marae* and *Pūkana*) for the main programme and Gabrielle Paringatai (of *I AM TV*) for the tutorial episode.

<sup>78</sup> These items are drawn from an earlier series made by Cinco Cine, *Koinā Te Kōrero*, in which Temuera Morrison explains Māori place names (Hoey, e-mail 2009).

<sup>79</sup> "Listen out for the revised *kīwaha*" [phrases]" The presenter moves easily from one language to the other, using Māori words in an English sentence. As well as aiding viewer familiarity with the *kupu hou* [new words], this practice echoes the bilingual speech of the cast of *Ākina*.

<sup>80</sup> Some of the words and phrases highlighted are not particularly everyday, e.g. "katewa/ to gallivant".

<sup>81</sup> This analysis is based on general viewing of the 2006 and 2007 series, paying special attention to an episode first broadcast 24.4.2007.

<sup>82</sup> Whilst the acting is convincing, the necessity to cover the key phrases occasionally results in slightly stilted speech.

<sup>83</sup> In schools, also, the use of 'bad language' is generally discouraged, so that children often miss crucial terms in the minority language which refer to 'embarrassing' body parts or functions.

<sup>84</sup> The use of 'pōkokohua' is not merely incidental, as the word is featured as a *kupu hou* [new word] in another episode.

<sup>85</sup> For example, feis ceoil and Oireachtas [traditional Irish music and cultural festivals] in Ireland, and kapa haka and Te Matatini [traditional Māori music and dance festivals] in New Zealand.

<sup>86</sup> Sharples figures *mōteatea* as a link to this past "he taura ki te Ao Kohatu" [a line going back to the Stone Age] (Sharples, 2007). Their purpose is to transmit cultural treasure "...kei te mōteatea ōna tini āhuatanga e akiaki ana i te hinengaro o te tangata kia mau, kia tuku, kia hī ake anō i te mātauranga i tukua ihotia hei te wā e hiahiatia ana" [Mōteatea has many purposes. It intends to encourage the continuation of oral tradition and knowledge retention so that generations after may seek this knowledge when they desire. (translation by Tupe whānau)] (Morēhu, 2006).

Poets had high status in the traditional Gaelic order. They might be part of a chief's retinue, asked to compose praises or *aortha* [satires] about the enemies of their patron; or they might travel the country, testing the hospitality of various chiefs. As with *tōhunga*, the *filí* [poets, seers] or bards spent several years learning stories and poetry from the elders. Sensory deprivation and mnemonic devices enabled them to remember genealogies and important stories verbatim. These people were the living archives of their tribe, and those of a high level were also composers of new material. Moloney remarks, however, that some of what we celebrate today as traditional style may not in fact be as old as we think (2006: 126).

<sup>87</sup> In both cases, this process was relatively informal. "For the first five series we just contacted people who we knew could provide performances of the *waiata* and asked them for their assistance in getting the material recorded" (Mohi, e-mail 2010).

"The approach of the series was to concentrate on the songs we wanted to do and then to find the singers to match the songs. We kept it loose however as often a singer might suggest another nice song that we included

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or on the road we might pick up some unexpected short songs or verses that we managed to fit in also by way of a bridge to the next sequence or an end to the programme” (McCarthy, e-mail 2009).

<sup>88</sup> The sheer joy of the singing is remarked on by the radio broadcaster Rónán Mac Aodha Bhuí: “When Irish speakers get together, it is just a wonderful, magical experience. I wish everybody could head out to Tory Island for a weekend and hear these people singing these sean-nós songs and see them doing these mad dances. They’d be really happy. They’d have a brilliant life” (Mac Aodha Bhuí, 2010, in Butler, 2010).

<sup>89</sup> As McQuillan, writing on the meanings of the term ‘dúchas’ puts it, “The physical, moral and emotive elements of the land... are considered inseparable” (2004: 24).

<sup>90</sup> These are the lyrics of the opening song: *Ko au anake tu kotahi nei e / kia kite atu au i te mata o te tangata/ ki ai ki au ki runga ra/ kia titiro iho e /ki Aotearoa e.* [Here I stand alone/ to look upon the face of humanity/ so that I, from up here/ can look down upon Aotearoa]

<sup>91</sup> “All the waiata in series one were recorded in studio because it’s a more controlled environment for sound and light. However, as the series grew so did I need to go out to the people rather than bringing the people to Auckland. On occasion we have asked groups to travel to studio-like locations but mostly it sets a nice scene to have the recordings done in the area where the waiata originate” (Mohi, e-mail 2010).

<sup>92</sup> ‘E rere rā te mātihetihe’ is the mourning of an older generation for a younger, a situation which is not expected. The composer draws on the strength of the mōteatea tradition to express his grief and to honour the memory of his nephew.

<sup>93</sup> “It’s as if the reo is a vehicle or ‘conductor’ of the wairua, and the singer the catalyst” (Rangihau, 2004, quoted in Browne, 2005: 27).

<sup>94</sup> *Mōteatea* repeats the songs, interspersing them with explanation, whereas in *Abair Amhrán* each song is performed only once, some prior knowledge being assumed.

<sup>95</sup> Obviously this relationship will be deeper if there is some ability to use the language, but the factors are not tied. Morgan (interview 2009) also refers to “that sensation that is only felt as ‘live’... a spiritual layer, an emotional layer, an emotional connection to the language.

<sup>96</sup> These differing approaches reflect attitudes to the indigenous language and its image, and result from the socio-political and historical context of New Zealand and Ireland, as discussed in previous chapters.

<sup>97</sup> “He mea hei whangai atu ki nga matou tamariki, mokopuna ki tenei mea, te haka. Ko te mea ke ko te reo te tuatahi. Te mea nui. Kātahi ka heke hoki te tumomo tikanga mo te tu mo te haka mo te whakaatu i ngā mahi”. /‘The haka is a learning tool for our children with the language being the most important, then the rules for performance following’ (Walker, 2009 on *Mōteatea*, 2009).

<sup>98</sup> TG4 has other song programmes which do provide lyrics. *Anam an Amhráin* (Sóna Teo & Cartoon Saloon, 2009/2010) is a four-part series, where established musicians (traditional and crossover) perform a newly arranged version of a traditional song, which is accompanied by animations depicting the story of each song. *Amhrán is Ansa Liom* (2009) each week features a well-known traditional singer, who chooses some of their favourite songs to perform. The website provides the lyrics for those who would like to sing along at home.

<sup>99</sup> Albert Lord, in a study of Serbian oral tradition, comments that as each performance is unique, and the words should not be set, as the moment of performance is in fact the moment of composition (Lord, 2000: 4, 13).

<sup>100</sup> Mohi mentions that the waiata were not to be exploited for commercial gain: “They belong to the various iwi involved with the recordings. Field footage is returned to the iwi after post-production and they are free to do with the material what they wish” (Mohi, e-mail 2010).

## CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this thesis has been to compare the two national indigenous language television stations Māori Television and TG4 in terms of how they engage with language in order to reach their audiences, with particular attention to perceptions of the language, issues of the nation and programme content. In other words, I have sought comprehensively to examine how television and language interact with and affect one another in the context of a national indigenous language broadcaster. Here, I summarise some of my findings.

TG4 and Māori Television were chosen as the subjects of this research because of their unique position as national public service broadcasters whose mandate is to use and represent a minoritised indigenous language which nonetheless has national status. The apparently contradictory demands both broadcasters face – to promote the minority language, and to provide a service that speaks to the entire nation – have been inventively negotiated in both cases. The work of Māori Television and TG4 demonstrates that using a minority language in the national mediascape can strike a chord with viewers who have different degrees of fluency and cultural knowledge. They provide a possible model for other minority language broadcasters who may also wish to expand their potential audience to include people from outside the linguistic community, although of course this is conditional upon the particular sociopolitical circumstances of the language in question.

Both TG4 and Māori Television broadcast to a nation where the majority of the people are not fluent speakers of the minority language, and where many have a negative view of the language and/or its associated culture. Although the relation between indigenous people and the apparatus of state is different in each country, there is a similar paradoxical attitude to the minority national language as a result of colonisation, where non-fluent speakers may be simultaneously ashamed and proud of their language. Māori Television operates in a country where the indigenous language has not been widely taught in schools, so that the proportion of ‘passively competent’ viewers is lower than in Ireland, where the language has enjoyed national status for about 90 years. This means that Māori Television makes language-learning series and tries to target audiences on the basis of their language ability, whereas TG4 tends to focus more on the entertainment function of public service television.

Both TG4 and Māori Television were established by government, as a result of significant long-term activism by grassroots people. Unsurprisingly, there is sometimes a clash between ‘national’ and ‘community’ expectations. Iwi and hapu are much stronger political communities in the Māori context than parish or county groups are in the Gaeltacht environment. In New Zealand, the concept of catering for the minoritised first people is also coloured by other initiatives such as Treaty

claims, whereas in Ireland, the distinction is more cultural than political. Nonetheless, it is difficult to run a television business with public service or cultural values in a market system – not to mention taking into account the logistical challenges of using a minority language, the ethical challenges of representing an indigenous language as well as the ideological challenges of promoting a national language.

### **Challenges and Strategies**

The particular challenges faced by TG4 and Māori Television can be discussed under three main headings: the demands of the medium, the demands of the industry, and the image of the language itself. In both Ireland and New Zealand, the mediascape comprises majority anglophone national television (although RTÉ has public service obligations, and shows much more local material than has been seen on TVNZ since the demise of the Charter) and international satellite and cable options. To compete with other broadcasters (national and international), a useful strategy for smaller channels is to schedule with an eye to what established broadcasters are offering at that time, and aim to ‘fill the gaps’ for channel-zappers. Intelligent scheduling can combine with on-demand viewing to serve an active audience who choose their own viewing patterns. TG4 acquires popular American series before other Irish broadcasters, and ‘hammocks’ them into the schedule. Although screening ‘mainstream’ imported programmes attracts a wide audience, it may also dilute the ethos of the channel. Nonetheless, the ‘hammocking’ of international and local material hooks audiences in to the channel, so that they stay to watch an Irish-language programme they might not otherwise have considered. Māori Television favours a different approach: block-scheduling for language. Whilst this enables people to enjoy a definite time period of 100% minority language broadcasting, it can also allow viewers to avoid the language altogether. The stations chose different approaches to this issue because there is a significant Māori audience who seek ‘immersive’ television, whereas in Ireland TG4 found audience figures increased when the schedule was ‘themed’ rather than divided by language.

Another strategy is to prioritise programming which is alternative to the material offered by other television stations, for example, public service programmes on Māori Television, and international non-anglophone programmes on TG4. Both Māori Television and TG4 have achieved a national profile, important for publically-funded stations, by providing an alternative cultural national television service. As well as nationally oriented material (such as Rugby World Cup, Anzac Day, Waitangi Day on Māori Television, and national sports events and St Patrick’s Day coverage on TG4), the indigenous language broadcaster foregrounds the specificity of the local and the regional. Intimate stories are conveyed through documentary, social histories, and archival material. This is exemplified by the iwi programmes for the Te Reo channel, and TG4’s drama series set in the Gaeltacht.

Whilst globalisation means that audiences often seek out local 'niches' on the satellite menu, it also means that the international becomes more present in any national mediascape. Māori Television and TG4 have fully recognised the potential of international material to provide a new perspective on indigenous culture, as well as bypassing the national. This is an interesting departure for broadcasting in Ireland and New Zealand, because it diminishes the apparent importance of the national hegemony and creates new links between the indigenous and the wider world. It is liberating to view the minority language and culture in terms of other places, instead of via the stale binary of the anglophone national majority, which has long been the case on other national channels in the two countries.

Māori Television and TG4 engage in a creative way with the conventions of television, emphasising procedure and process as well as style, form and content. However, it is in their innovative exploration of relationships between the linguistic minority and the national majority, not to mention between the linguistic minority and other groups, from the local to the international, that their real alterity shines through. The conception of 'selves' and 'others' portrayed on the channels is new, recognising differences within and between groups, but insisting on connections as well. Most importantly, the various relationships are experienced starting from a minority and indigenous point of view. There is a sense of excitement that such perspectives are being broadcast at last. Te Anga Nathan looks forward to further dynamism and change, reflecting: "[a] generation with the experience is coming up now. You can't change things overnight, but you can change things in a generation" (Nathan, interview 2008).

### **Television industry**

Neither TG4 nor Māori Television receives adequate funding to run an all-day 100% minority language television station of high quality. An added financial constraint is associated with using a language in an environment where another is dominant, because translation is necessary on screen (reversioning, subtitling) and behind the scenes. Faced with lower production budgets than their majority language counterparts, both channels rely on tactics such as the clever use of archives, multi-tasking staff and making in-house studio-based discussion programmes, as well as hunting for external revenue. TG4 use revenue derived from advertising to acquire international programmes, and all their government funding is devoted to Irish-language commissioning. They engage in co-funding with other national and cross-border bodies, and encourage independent producers to seek sponsorship to add to their budget. Māori Television, wary of certain advertising for cultural reasons, focuses primarily on in-house production as it is less expensive to produce. Whilst creativity within financial limits is to be admired, there is a danger that professionals will be expected to continue to produce high quality work on insufficient budgets, because of their linguistic or cultural sympathies. It is not fair to expect individual producers to make long-term

sacrifices for their television station – it would mean a false veneer of success, while underneath there is struggle and exploitation.

In both Ireland and New Zealand, there is a shortage of staff and talent who are fluent in the minoritised language and culture, and who also have television skills. Training schemes and a reliance on independent sector have been the initial response to these challenges, and Māori Television has also been running in-house language training. This is not necessary for TG4, as most of the in-house staff are fluent speakers. In both countries, the (minority-language) production community is a small world, and most people know each other socially. This makes the stations somewhat more approachable than other, larger ones. However, some Gaeltacht and iwi-based producers fear that they are not given priority in commissioning, because the stations find larger anglophone companies more experienced in production. In the early days, both television stations favoured production quality over community development, for reasons of political survival (to maintain public funding and to attract a wider audience), although they recognise that a balance is necessary for reasons of ethics (to honour their mandate to promote the language, which is based in these communities). Now, there is more active outreach to the *croíphobail* [core communities] in search of programme ideas. Máire Ní Chonláin of TG4 has emphasised the importance to the channel of inviting in “na duine amuigh ansin le scéalta... nach bhfuil faighte fós” [the people out there with stories... who have not yet been found](Ní Chonláin, interview 2008). The major role of both TG4 and Māori Television is to represent the diverse groups of people who speak the indigenous language, or who are becoming refamiliarised with its importance in their lives.

### **The Image of the Language**

The image of both the Māori and Irish languages in the eyes of non-speakers has been, over the last century, often a negative one. Associated with an old-fashioned “dourness which seem[ed] to be the sine qua non of ‘authentic’ culture” (Barry, 1994-5: 34), rural simplicity, and a stifling atmosphere of musty tradition, the minoritised language appeared to offer little to the outsider, and many young speakers were also unconvinced about the place of their heritage in the contemporary world. However, with the advent of innovative broadcasting which explored new settings for the indigenous language, its adaptability and creativity were demonstrated to go far beyond the expectations of the nay-sayers. Māori Television shows *te reo* being used in many more environments than most viewers would experience in their daily lives, which liberates the language from its former almost exclusively traditional setting. Both channels are intent on using language in such a way as to include as many viewers as possible, and also to reflect the indigenous national language to its best advantage. TG4 promotes an image of fun and adventure, putting the Irish language into new and unexpected contexts. Although the channel has a strong link to tradition, it can also be irreverent. For fluent-speakers, this is merely the making visible of an integral part of the full range of their language practice, but for the non-fluent, this is a new and exciting thing to

see. Television, as an unthreatening domestic medium, is easily accessible to people, and provides non-speakers with a new perspective on a language and culture which may hitherto have seemed to them to be a “closed door” (Parr, interview 2007). Māori Television and TG4 present the minoritised language in ‘unexpected’ domains and informal settings, often showcasing youthful and good-looking presenters, which brings new life to the tired stereotype of a dying language. However, there can often be tension between traditional and modern images of minority language speakers (Hourigan, 2003: 129), as the slick trendiness of a television presenter may in some ways disrespect the integrity of the real sources of the language. (Re)representing these images and inventing new depictions of aspects of people and culture requires delicacy.

The appearance and success of Māori Television and TG4 have also resulted in an increase in the use of the national indigenous language on ‘mainstream’ national broadcasters. In New Zealand, for example, greetings on radio and television often include some words in Māori, and presenters, journalists and even weather forecasters now make an effort to properly pronounce placenames in te reo. In Ireland, this practice had already long been in place on RTÉ, but since the coming of TG4, several independent broadcasters now feature segments or items such as music chart shows as Gaeilge (BCI, 2006).

For cultural and historical reasons, the indigenous national language is the *raison d’être* of both TG4 and Māori Television. However, it should not be fetishised. It is important to have a range of content that speaks to the real life audience, many of whom lack the cultural or linguistic nous to fully understand some of the more traditional material. Reaching out to this wider audience should not occur at the expense of the *croíphobal*, for whom television broadcasting can valorise their language, especially in the eyes of the young. It is important to maintain a balance between traditions and the real sources of the language without neglecting contemporary global developments. The current image of the minoritised language as seen on TG4 and Māori Television is one of power and creativity. From a position where many people regarded the national indigenous language as irrelevant and limited, now depictions of its beauty and variety abound.

Both broadcasters use the alterity of their respective languages to engage with the world in a distinctly different way to majority national television channels. Apart from the new perspective on issues of the national afforded by programmes on Māori Television and TG4, the indigenous language broadcasters are not afraid to engage with new subjects and international affairs. All of these elements are encountered through the minoritised language, which puts a new complexion not only on the subject, but also on the language itself. In engaging with and developing the image of the language, broadcasters are adding to something which has been around for a long time before them, and will persist after they have gone. It is therefore important that the multi-faceted image encompass elements of the ‘old’ and the ‘new’, so that the two may combine to lead to



another manifestation of the image in hybrid form, in a continuous link to the past. Māori whakapapa holds that each 'new' thing is actually the offspring of two existing things. Perhaps the image of the language today can be considered the child of the world of broadcasting and the spirit of the people who made it happen.

#### **Vision of Māori Television and TG4**

Both Māori Television and TG4 are looking towards the future. Their aims and vision involve a sense of ancestry and tradition, but also a strong sense of posterity. Many people have spoken of the privilege and duty today's fluent speaker has in respect of passing on the language to the next generation, so that continuity remains unbroken from previous generations. The language is a "taonga e tuku iho" [a treasure which has been passed down] (Ihaka, 2009), or a "seod a tugadh dúinn saor in aisce agus dualgas orainn a chinntiú go mairfidh sí" [a treasure we have been gifted and we have the duty to make sure it survives] (Mhic Gairbheith, e-mail 2010). Te Aroha Wheoki-Mane sees continuity between the belief and persistence of the campaigners and today's media blossoming: "they fought for it and we're living it" (Wheoki-Mane, interview 2010).

As well as having this sense of ownership and continuity, programme-makers and programme-viewers are aware that they are dealing with a living language and a living culture which are bound to change and evolve. In both stations there is emphasis on leadership and long-term vision. Apart from spiritual or ethical considerations, there is the practical concern about how the station will continue. There must always be a plan for the future, involving the type of programmes to be commissioned, and studies as to the sort of audience envisaged for them. Continuity and reinvention must co-exist, established production houses be encouraged and new people trained into the industry. International co-operation, as begun by WITBN, is a valuable asset in strengthening the variety of perspectives experienced behind the scenes, as well as shown on the screens of indigenous language broadcasters.

Already in both Ireland and New Zealand the images of TG4 and Māori Television are becoming icons for the languages themselves. Innovative branding and promotional campaigns for the indigenous language channels have brought Irish and te reo into the public eye in a new guise. Mixing traditional and contemporary elements in clever and often irreverent ways, these "tradigital... hybrids" (Lysaght, 2009: 56) represent a new perspective on what an indigenous language and its culture can be and do. Whilst the 'cool to kōrero' or 'Gaeilgeoir chic' vibe expressed through the media is a positive development in that it moves the image of the language into everybody's home, associating it with youth, contemporary technology and a wide range of genres, it is not the only facet of the language. It should not fall to the television station to become the sole representative of the enormously rich world of the minoritised national language. Television stations cannot be taken to represent 'their' linguistic group/s. Rather, they are partial – although

significant - manifestations of a greater linguistic and cultural reservoir which may only be apprehended through the people themselves.

### **Reflection on the research process**

In studying the area of indigenous national television broadcasting, it is important to have some appreciation of the language and culture/s in question, as well as their socio-political environment. I was lucky to have very open and articulate interviewees from both broadcasting environments. The hospitality and interest these people showed may partly be explained by the subject and purpose of my thesis, and also because I had production experience and was making an effort to speak the language. I am very grateful to all these interviewees for their insight and participation. I would recommend that future researchers in the area have as good a knowledge of the language as possible, as this assists in understanding and appreciating other aspects of the broadcasting experiences and perspectives which may differ from those of majority languages. Māori scholars have also commented on the necessity to “critique Māori issues from a Māori viewpoint” (Mulholland, 2007: 11), and the cultural positioning of the researcher is certainly a key element to consider in evaluating the approach and content of research.

Following Linda Smith’s view that a researcher should “spell out the limitations of a project” (Smith, 1999: 140), I take this opportunity to outline some areas in this study which remain to be explored by future researchers. I do not have enough fluency in te reo to comment properly on the intricacies of linguistic variety on screen. My cultural knowledge is similarly limited, and I hope that researchers in the future with the requisite cultural and linguistic background will be able to see what I have not. This project examines the vision and image of language and people through television broadcasting in a national context. I privilege the experience and opinions of people who have worked in the television and film industry in these small countries, where the pool of fluent or native speakers is even smaller. This means that any findings are likely to be contingent and not representative. However, in a sector of this scale, I consider a qualitative approach to be more valuable. As a researcher moving between the northern and southern hemisphere over a three and a half-year period, my research obviously has some gaps of detail. When in Ireland, I may have missed something in Aotearoa and vice versa. I have done my best to include everything I consider relevant, but accept that some areas will be incomplete.

One of the more difficult aspects of this research was the geographical distances involved between the two channels which were the subject of my thesis. Apart from one trip to Ireland in 2008, my research took place in New Zealand over the three and a half years. The problem of distance was largely overcome by e-mail communications and online viewing of programme material. Another challenge was the continually evolving nature of language policy and practice at both stations, which meant that several sections of the thesis had to be updated and revised as real life overtook

them. When I began my research, neither TG4 nor Māori Television had official language policies or guidelines, and TG4 was still connected to RTÉ. Now, three years later, TG4 has independent status, and a new Broadcasting Act (2009) has obliged the station to articulate its public service priorities and to instigate audience councils for further communication with its growing viewership. Since its launch, Māori Television has consistently asserted its place in the New Zealand mediascape as a broadcaster with national relevance. Aside from its local and public service material, the channel has also made a successful bid to be the lead free-to-air television broadcaster for the Rugby World Cup in 2011, a move which is likely to attract even further attention to the station. It has also over the last few years been developing a detailed Rautaki Reo [language strategy] in conjunction with other language bodies and the production sector, which will change the way in which te reo is treated on screen and on set. In 2008, as well as the launch of its second channel (Te Reo), Māori Television also initiated the World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Network, which aims to facilitate the sharing of programme ideas and material across international boundaries, as well as organizing training and staff exchanges amongst its members. This is a significant development for the mediascape of indigenous and minority language media, and also has the potential to affect national conceptions of public television.

In focusing on two countries, and setting out the background context for each channel, I have had to omit other aspects which would also be worthy of attention from future researchers. So far, there is also a lack of research on minority language audiences, and their motivations and attitudes in accessing television in their own language. However, current research in New Zealand is investigating the popularity of Māori Television with non-Māori audiences (see Binning, 2010). The locally-produced material currently broadcast on both Māori Television and TG4 is also a very rich area for future analysis. Apart from the genres I have examined here, there are many others, e.g. archival-based programmes, cookery series drawing on traditional foods and places, quiz shows which rely on knowledge of the language and community norms, and, especially in the case of TG4, drama. Whilst both channels have achieved positive attention for their inventive documentary strands, the drama series and comedy-dramas produced for TG4 display very interesting negotiations of the relationships the Irish language has with storyline and genre, with different groups of people (characters and audiences), and also with the English language.

In terms of the screen representation of national indigenous languages, there is great scope for further research. Areas such as standardisation, the relation of learner-language to native dialect, and the ways in which new terminology is communicated and adopted, all contribute to the creation of a certain image of the language in the eyes of television producers and audiences. Uí Chollatáin notes that in Ireland, the Irish-language language media is now being reviewed and criticised for the first time “mar chuid den phríomhshruth iriseoireachta” [as part of mainstream

journalism], but is concerned that without a strengthening of its standards, it may fall back into the corner of 'minority interest' material (Uí Chollatáin, e-mail 2008).

Practitioners feel as if they have a stake in their indigenous language television service, and have a great sense of purpose in their work, but may sometimes become alienated if the broadcaster veers more towards conventional television values instead of the values of the indigenous community. The legislation which frames the aims of the national indigenous language broadcaster is less important than the sense of purpose and sense of mission that the people working in the television industry actually feel in respect of their language and culture. The image of the language held in the minds of television broadcasters creates a spirit which imbues the entire schedule and working practices at the station – not just the on screen 'image'. This spirit is organic and developing constantly, in relation to its environment and to the people who work through it. Although there is the risk that it may be compromised by external influences (non-fluent staff, imported programming, etc.), it is also the case that when the spirit of the language is strong, such external factors will serve to enrich it further (e.g. bilingual humour, self-awareness of comedy, conscious twisting of 'mainstream' genres). Despite majority concerns that a minority language television service would prove to be a white elephant and a waste of taxpayers' money, both Māori Television and TG4 are currently the most innovative and dynamic national broadcasters operating in their respective countries. This is in no small part due to the passion and energy of the fluent speakers who produce work for them. This work is an expression of the genius of the language which had for so long been deprived of adequate televisual representation.

## APPENDIX A

In the course of my research, I interviewed over forty individuals, from independent production companies and iwi/community radio as well as people who work directly with Māori Television and TG4. In order to identify and make contact with possible interviewees, I contacted directors and executives at both TG4 and Māori Television to explain my research project and to request permission to approach their employees for interviews. I also relied on my personal and professional contacts (I have done some work in production in Ireland and New Zealand on projects for broadcast on the two stations). As the interviews progressed, further people were suggested to me by the interviewees, and I also came across other very helpful and informative people through serendipity.

For the convenience of my interviewees, the interviews took place in their workplace or at a hui (for example, the annual Ngā Aho Whakaari hui, held in various locations around Aotearoa, the inaugural World Indigenous Television Broadcasters Conference in Auckland, the 2008 Celtic Media Festival and Comhdháil na Gaeilge in Galway). Otherwise, we chose an alternative neutral public venue such as a hotel or a café, where I offered the interviewee refreshment.

Most interviews lasted between 40 minutes and an hour, although some (which took a conversational turn) went on for about two hours. This resulted in extremely rich material from which I could draw for my thesis. Most interviewees were amenable to being audio-recorded, and so I worked partly from these digital records and partly from my notes when transferring the interview information to the computer. I also made transcriptions of the audio-recorded interviews. The interview process was approved by the University of Auckland Ethics Committee.

In conducting personal interviews, I respected the norms laid out by Cram (2003)<sup>1</sup>.

The values of Māori and Irish communication are quite similar: personal contact is preferable to telephone or e-mail (although these were used to contact some people who were not available to meet in person), and conversation is an important means of getting to know the other person.

I approached the interviews with some key questions, but the structure was quite open, so that the interviewees could elaborate on whichever areas they found most pertinent or interesting. In most cases, the interview became a two-way conversation, where my own background and experiences as well as knowledge of the other broadcasting environment also entered the discussion.

In order to show respect for the interviewee, I opened the Māori interviews in te reo Māori, with an introduction of my own background and reasons for researching the area of minority national language television. The body of the interview was carried out in English, with Māori words used

where necessary to convey the concept more clearly. Many fluent interviewees also spoke a few sentences in te reo at different stages of the interview before reverting to English, as they knew that I was learning the language and did not have enough mastery to understand everything in te reo. I was able to conduct the Irish interviews in the Irish language.

During the latter stages of compiling the thesis, I contacted each interviewee (as had been agreed from the beginning) to double-check that I was quoting them accurately. In some cases people wished to modify or update their comments (for example, comments made in a 2007 interview may have become less pertinent due to developments in the mediascape in the intervening period). I made the appropriate changes to reflect the most recent opinion of the interviewee concerned. It was of the utmost importance that trust and respect be maintained, as the level of communication between me and the interviewees was very good, and I was aware that often the views of minority language speakers can be misrepresented in majority language accounts.

In both Ireland and New Zealand, I was lucky to have very open and articulate interviewees who were personally and professionally interested in the subject of my study. The hospitality and interest these people showed greatly contributed to the final thesis, and I am very grateful to everybody who participated.

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<sup>1</sup> These are similar to the television production guidelines proposed by Tainui Stephens (see Chapter 5).

- Me hui a kanohi - ahakoa te aha [meet face-to-face, no matter what]
  - Me ū tonu ki ngā tikanga Māori [demonstrate respect for Māori custom, i.e. ask advice of kaumātua]
  - Me mātau ki tō te kaupapa [understand what the project is about]
  - Me mārāma ki ngā wero mai o te ao pāho [understand the challenges of broadcasting, i.e. explain clearly to non-professionals/ members of the public what will be involved, to enable truly informed consent]
  - Me whai mana tonu ngā mea e mana ana [Ensure authority is appropriately acknowledged, including IP]
  - Me whai hua te katoa - mai runga mai raro [Something should come of the project for all involved]
- (Stephens, 2003; Haami, 2008: 39-41).

## APPENDIX B

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