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17 Language, Identity and Empowerment in Endangered Language Contexts

Māori and Guernesiais

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17.1 INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of communities worldwide wish to reclaim the use of endangered/minoritized languages; there is also increasing interest in language revitalization as a field of study (e.g. Stebbins, Eira & Couzens, 2017; Hinton, Huss & Roche, 2018; Rehg & Campbell, 2018). Learning and promoting small or minoritized languages does not always have obvious communicative or economic benefits, yet demand for learning such languages is growing. As pointed out by King (2009), Second Language Acquisition (SLA) studies tend to focus on mainstream national and international languages, chiefly English, either in formal education or in contexts of migration (e.g. Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Block, 2007; Norton, 2013). There is relatively little research into the identities and motivations of learners of small, endangered and minoritized languages, especially adults; educational research tends to focus on the role of schools in language revitalization (e.g. Hornberger, 2008; Todal, 2018). This chapter investigates why prospective new adult speakers invest time and effort in learning minoritized, heritage or endangered languages. Our case studies are from two contexts which have both similarities and contrasts.

A language is most frequently defined as endangered when intergenerational transmission has ceased (Fishman, 1991; UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages, 2003; Lewis & Simons, 2010), that is, the parental generation – especially young adults – do not use the language in the home or community. It often ensues that there is a generation gap in community transmission, with most fluent speakers of grandparent generation

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or older. In such contexts, effective adult second language learning becomes crucial for a new speaker community to emerge. Without competent adult speakers, a language cannot be passed on, either through education or in non-formal contexts such as the family and community. Yet very little attention has been paid to the motivations and goals of adult learners of minoritized languages, for which existing frameworks are not necessarily explanatory.

Increasingly, links are being drawn between language, identity and personal and community empowerment; many interviewees in this research report being motivated by a desire to reconnect with roots, or to reclaim elements of their identity or culture which they feel have been denied to them. As pointed out by Norton (2013), identity constructions are key in outcomes of language learning; our research has found that this is even more true of minoritized languages.

This chapter looks at how learners and new speakers of minoritized languages construct their identities, focussing on case studies from opposite sides of the globe: Guernesiais (Guernsey, Channel Islands) and Māori (New Zealand). We use the term 'minoritized' to underline that language shift is a hegemonic process, and to highlight the social and political inequalities that marginalize members of Indigenous and minoritized groups. Although many minoritized languages are spoken by relatively few people, minoritization is a sociopolitical and cultural process rather than a numerical one. Even large populations can become minoritized (as happened frequently during colonialization). This chapter concentrates on two case studies of Indigenous minorities, but minoritization processes and attitudes towards migrant minorities are similar: both tend to be stigmatized and language shift is common. Language revitalization thus becomes one way to reclaim prestige.

Our case studies focus on two Indigenous languages, both of which have been displaced by English through demographic change, political events and loss of sociocultural prestige. Both are also the subject of revitalization efforts to increase speaker numbers and overall prestige.

Māori is the language of New Zealand's Indigenous people and has had official status since 1987. It is spoken to conversational proficiency by 21 per cent of people of Māori ethnicity, who comprise 15 per cent of New Zealand's population of 4.9 million (see Section 17.3.2): a total of approximately 154,000 speakers. Although its level of endangerment is debated (Benton, 1991), the number of speakers has fallen significantly since the mid-twentieth century.

Guernesiais is the Indigenous language of Guernsey, Channel Islands, but has only been recognized officially since 20 August 2020. Its absolute numbers

are necessarily smaller, given the small size of the island. Like Māori, its vitality has fallen dramatically since the mid-twentieth century, to an estimated sixty fluent speakers at the time of writing (Yan Marquis, personal communication), or 0.1 per cent of the population.

The co-authors of this chapter have been struck by commonalities in the situations of these languages, and attitudes towards them, despite their geographical distance and historical differences. Through both their similarities and contrasts they represent useful case studies for investigating links between language, identity and empowerment amongst new speakers. We compare and contrast our findings with regard to factors that emerge as salient when adults decide to learn these languages: linguistic *mudes*, motivation, identity construction and empowerment (see Section 17.2 for discussion of these concepts).

Although these highly minoritized contexts might be thought rare or irrelevant to language learning studies in general, endangered languages constitute at least half of the world's 7,000+ languages (Crystal, 2000; Eberhard, Simons & Fennig, 2020a); as many as 90 per cent according to some sources (Krauss, 1992). Given the growth in interest in language revitalization and the growing demand for learning heritage languages, it is beneficial to investigate this gap in research to date.

17.2 LEARNING A SMALL LANGUAGE

One of the aims of our research was to find out to what extent learning a minoritized language resembles learning a majority language (national or international). An obvious difference is the availability of materials in the target language (textbooks, reference materials, literature, websites, etc.). Another is the availability of interlocutors. Learners of Guernesiais have difficulty finding people to practise with, as native speakers are increasingly elderly and decreasing in number precipitously. Even learners of a larger minoritized language such as Māori may not find communities of speakers readily available, and the number of native speakers is falling rapidly. Many teaching methods established for larger languages, and 'can-do' descriptors of learning stages (which can double as goals) such as those used in the Common European Framework for Languages, rely on the availability of target-language media and materials. There is also frequently a shortage of potential teachers of minoritized languages. Learners' own goals may therefore not be framed exclusively in terms of (for example) joining a target

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community, increasing their capital in a linguistic market or even increasing their language proficiency; but they may include connection to roots or relatives, identity and enjoyment (King, 2009). They may also include lofty yet imprecise goals such as 'saving the language', and/or political goals such as regional autonomy.

These differences are reflected in our research, especially in how we engage with established frameworks of motivation and identity. Although we initially framed our research using these, our case studies show that we soon found that their premisses did not match our contexts and emerging findings (see Section 17.3). Sallabank's research especially has benefitted from participation in a network of researchers focussing on the dynamics involved in becoming a 'new speaker' of a language in the context of a multilingual Europe,[1] which developed the concept of *muda* (see Section 17.2.3) as a stage in learning a new language.

17.2.1 Motivation in Learning a Minoritized Language

Motivation is relevant to discussion of identity and empowerment as factors in learning minoritized languages: a motivated learner will display 'effort, desire and affect' – 'affect being used here to refer to a positive emotional outcome' (Bower, 2019: 569). For decades, research into language learning motivation was dominated by Gardner and Lambert's (1972) dichotomy of instrumental versus integrative orientations towards languages. Learners with an instrumental orientation aim to increase their capital (Bourdieu, 1986) through acquisition of linguistic expertise (e.g. to gain access to further education or a higher-status job). In Gardner and Lambert's (1972) framework, learners with an integrative motivation wish to identify with a target community, which they aim to join through learning the language. However, neither instrumental nor integrative orientations seem relevant when learning a minoritized language with neither capital nor a substantial speaker community.

In contrast, Dörnyei (2009) and Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) proposed the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), according to which learners attempt to reduce the discrepancy between their current position and their desired identities as speakers of the target language (the *ideal L2 self* and the *ought-to L2 self*). This has clear relevance to questions of identity in second language learning.

[1] Funded by European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action IS1306 on New Speakers. For details, see www.nspk.org.uk/ (last accessed 1.9.2020).

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However, as pointed out by Mendoza and Phung (2019: 123), the L2MSS is particularly relevant to language learning for increased cultural capital, and the majority of research focusses on prestigious languages such as English, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Japanese, German, French, Spanish, Italian and Russian. The current chapter argues that increased capital is not necessarily relevant to learners of minoritized languages. In a survey of motivation studies, Lanvers (2017: 520) notes that 'learning heritage languages is associated with motivation relating to personal enrichment rather than instrumental motivation', but does not focus on these languages, recognizing the differences between heritage contexts and the formal teaching of major languages (which is reflected in Sallabank's findings). The difficulty of applying typical L2 motivations in cases of endangered and Indigenous languages has been well noted in New Zealand (Ratima & May, 2011; Te Huia, 2015). Using the L2MSS framework, Macintyre, Baker and Sparling (2017a) look at motivations of learners of Scottish Gaelic in a doubly minoritized context: as a heritage language in Nova Scotia, Canada. They propose a key addition to the L2MSS: the *rooted L2 self*, which is 'defined by connections to place and speakers of the language; heritage passions reflect the development of emotional bonds, core values, and strengths; and heritage convictions capture deep-seated beliefs, attitudes, and mindsets' (2017a: 501). It thus combines elements of both Gardner and Lambert's concept of integrative motivation and Dörnyei's L2MSS, and is highly relevant to our findings.

It became clear from responses to Sallabank's pilot questionnaires (which used items from Dörnyei's surveys) and interviews that respondents found the concepts of *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self* confusing and inappropriate: in the context of a small, highly endangered, post-vernacular language such concepts had little overt meaning to them. Nevertheless, qualitative analysis of responses does produce some findings in these areas, which will be discussed in Section 17.3.1. The relatively small pool of learners meant that research tools and frameworks widely used for SLA and L2MSS research were inappropriate (Mendoza & Phung, 2019; Dörnyei, personal communication). Both the case studies in this chapter (see Section 17.3) employed a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014), using inductive categorizing to group the data.

Motivation has traditionally been considered primarily an individual psycholinguistic phenomenon which ignores social factors and power relations. Costa (2016) suggests that language revitalization should be considered as a social movement: as one way for subordinate groups to reclaim legitimacy and social prestige. Although Costa is critical of simplistic rhetoric, increasingly

links are being drawn between language revitalization and personal and community empowerment (King, 2009, 2021), and even with mental and physical wellbeing (e.g. Whalen, Moss & Baldwin, 2016). Thus, instead of asking 'what can I do for my language?', increasingly language activists are asking 'what can my language do for me?' Our findings indicate both individual motivations and social factors, which will be reviewed next.

17.2.2 Identity, Investment and Capital

Identity can be considered from both an individual psychological and from a societal standpoint. Recent studies see identities not as immutable, but shaped while people compose and position themselves within the various social settings of their everyday lives (e.g. Heller et al., 1999; Joseph, 2004; Omoniyi & White, 2006; Norton, 2013). Social actors emphasize or prioritize particular aspects of identity depending on context; or they may have particular identities imposed upon them by those with more symbolic and material power (and may rebel against these – see Section 17.3.1). However, many of our participants held more essentialist notions, making comments such as, 'Without the language I would not feel complete' (see Section 17.3).

Block (2007) and Norton (2009, 2013) focus on social identity, exemplifying the 'social turn' in language acquisition research (Block, 2003). Norton (2009, 2013) developed the concept of *investment*, which 'must be seen within a sociological framework, and seeks to make a meaningful connection between a learner's desire and commitment to learn a language, and their changing identity' (Norton, 2009: 353). Learners 'invest' in the target language in order to acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which in turn should increase the value of their cultural capital. Norton's framework focusses especially on unequal access to language resources and opportunities, including the impact of racism and sexism on learners' experiences and outcomes.

Duchêne and Heller (2012) discuss the notions of 'pride' and 'profit' in relation to language. This is not simply a renaming of Gardner and Lambert's concept of integrative versus instrumental language orientations, but highlights 'mobilization of feelings of pride of membership' in nation-state building (Duchêne & Heller, 2012: 5). Norton's (2009, 2013) concept of 'investment' in language learning seems not dissimilar to Duchêne and Heller's (2012) notion of 'profit', since both highlight 'tensions over who controls the newly marketable resources, how value is assigned to them, and how profits from them are distributed' (Duchêne & Heller, 2012: 12).

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A key issue, however, is that a minoritized language may be perceived as having little instrumental use or obvious communicative or economic benefits, and so does not fit neatly into Gardner and Lambert's integration–instrumentality dichotomy, nor Duchêne and Heller's framework of 'pride' and 'profit', since the promise of gaining cultural capital via L2 study is directly related to the international stance and power the language carries. Our ideological contexts are more complicated than those of learners trying to access the capital of a major language such as English or French: investment in learning highly minoritized languages will not necessarily be repaid through cultural or economic capital. Why, then, do people wish to learn them?

17.2.3 The Linguistic *Muda*

The term *muda* emerged from research into new speakers of minoritized languages. Walsh and O'Rourke (2014: 68) define *muda* as 'a critical juncture in the life cycle where a speaker changes linguistic practice in favour of the target language', with 'target language' in this context referring to the language that the new speaker is engaged with. As noted by Pujolar and Puigdevall (2015: 167), the study of linguistic *mudes* provides 'a new and productive perspective on how people develop their linguistic repertoire, their attachment to specific languages and the significance of these aspects for social identity'.

With a medium-sized minoritized language such as Catalan, Irish or Māori, there are several opportunities for linguistic *mudes* throughout the lifespan, as described by Pujolar and Puigdevall (2015) and Walsh and O'Rourke (2014). But our other case study, Guernesiais, is less widely spoken and has even less institutional support. Given the small size of both speaker and general populations, it can be difficult for prospective new speakers to make such a conscious change to their linguistic practices, due to a lack of opportunities and interlocutors. There are nevertheless examples of individuals and small groups who have decided to use Guernesiais in the family and to converse with other speakers/learners, both informally and at organized events. We therefore interpret *muda* not only in terms of language proficiency, but as a mindset indicating identification with, and attachment to, the heritage language.

Our research shows that while processes of identification and commodification are present, in these contexts *mudes* are more complex sociolinguistic processes that are worthy of further investigation. We now turn to our two case studies.

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17.3 CASE STUDIES

17.3.1 Guernesiais

Guernesiais is the Indigenous language of Guernsey, Channel Islands. Since World War II, the use of Guernesiais has decreased sharply, and intergenerational transmission largely ceased in the 1960s. According to recent estimates, there may be fewer than a hundred fluent speakers remaining, mainly aged over eighty. Language revitalization efforts to date have been largely ineffectual, so there may be as few as ten proficient (mainly new) speakers under the age of sixty-five. There are, however, efforts by a couple of families to speak Guernesiais with their children, which are indicative of increasing desire to revitalize Guernesiais, in common with many other small, highly endangered languages. An online questionnaire received 214 responses, indicating that interest in learning Guernesiais far outstrips opportunities to do so; several respondents complained about a lack of classes beyond beginner level.

Guernesiais has traditionally had low status in a di/triglossic relationship with French (the language of education and officialdom before the twentieth century) and English, now the dominant language in all domains. Although Sallabank (2013) found that attitudes are changing, covert attitudes remain negative, especially among older community members. Guernesiais was only recognized as an official language (alongside French and English) on 20 August 2020. These overt and covert attitudes and underlying ideologies of deficit may affect learners' learning experiences and outcomes.

Learning a very small language such as Guernesiais involves additional challenges to those faced by learners of any language. There are few interlocutors available, since most fluent speakers are elderly and often not very active, meaning that the speaker community is increasingly fragmented. Learning the language may be perceived as having little practical use for purposes such as business or travel (except perhaps heritage tourism); some of Sallabank's interviewees stated opinions such as, 'it would be more useful to learn a big language like French, Spanish or Chinese'.

Sallabank and her Guernsey collaborator Yan Marquis therefore carried out research to investigate the motivations, goals and needs of adult learners of Guernesiais, of whom there are thirty to forty.[2] Sallabank and Marquis's

[2] Sallabank and Marquis are grateful for support from British Academy Small Grant SG112592.

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study employed a range of research methods. We observed adult beginners' and elementary classes (the highest level available), incorporating twenty-five learners aged from their twenties to seventies, male and female. Questionnaires were circulated to elicit specific learner needs (e.g. spelling preferences, themes, vocabulary); and Marquis held topic-based discussions (e.g. language requirements for specific situations and subjects). Sallabank interviewed thirty current and former learners, and analyzed learners' lesson notes and posts on social media, which provided useful data on learners' thoughts and motivations.

The demographics of questionnaire respondents revealed that 53 per cent of those who self-identified as learners and would-be learners were aged forty to sixty, and 56 per cent of questionnaire respondents were male; these reflect the demographics of observed lessons. Equal proportions of male and female respondents reported learning Guernesiais currently, although a higher proportion of male respondents who are not currently learning expressed a desire to do so. In the lessons observed, it is predominantly middle-aged male learners who demonstrate longer-term commitment, and are attaining higher levels, while more women than men have given up. This may reflect gender issues such as caregiving commitments, but may also be related to findings on legitimacy (Sallabank & Marquis, 2018).

The question 'Why do you want to learn Guernesiais?' in both questionnaires and interviews elicited responses which highlight a range of motivations and ideologies. A desire to 'save the language' is reflected in quotes such as the following:

> 'I don't want it to die out' (Female, 50s)
>
> 'To reclaim the language not passed on by parents/grandparents' (Female, 30s)
>
> 'I am busy at the moment with writing but intend to study our own Guernsey French as part of keeping our dear island's culture in trust for our children and grandchildren' (Female, 70)
>
> 'I want to be able to pass words and phrases to my Grandchildren' (Female, 40s)

In our second case study (see Section 17.3.2) this is referred to as commitment 'towards the language itself', which is less frequent than commitment towards self and others among learners of both Guernesiais and Māori. These responses also reflect a trope of *reclaiming* a resource that learners feel they have not had access to, as well as identity-building through affective orientations to heritage language learning.

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Some participants reported learning Guernesiais due to a general interest in languages and historical linguistics.[3] Others provided alternative discourses to criticisms of lack of utility/capital, which they had quite likely encountered:

> 'I would be better off learning more advanced regular French – but this is my home language' (Male, 40s)
>
> 'A sense of place and family provides a different type of usefulness' (Male, 40s)
>
> 'It's a way to feel connected to the island' (Male, 50s)
>
> 'It's a cultural focus, what makes Guernsey special' (Female, 30s)

In an interview with local media, one respondent commented, 'Language is very emotive and part of your identity; … in this vanilla-coloured world, it's important people appreciate what's on their doorstep'.

These responses indicate *pride* in Duchêne and Heller's (2012) sense. They also reflect a common theme of 'reconnection with roots', reflecting the concept of 'rooted L2 self':

> 'When I was a kid I used to love hearing my grandparents speak it – I was always fascinated by it' (Male, 40s)
>
> 'I remember my aunts speaking on the phone in Guernesiais' (Male, 50s)
>
> 'As a Guernseyman it's a crying shame that we can't speak our language – part of me is missing, I don't feel complete as an individual' (Male, 60s)

Some of these responses could also be said to reflect nationalist-type[4] feelings regarding language and culture. Nevertheless, another relevant demographic is that a third of this particular language class were not of local origin, which indicates that 'the rooted L2 self' does not necessarily imply a simple essentialist link between language and ethnicity.

Responses to the question 'What would you like to be able to say in Guernesiais?' frequently elicited affective reasons for wanting to use the language, as well as a would-be integrative orientation to Guernesiais. Learners would like to be able to have a chat, have meaningful conversations and to express their feelings – all of which are part of building a Guernesiais-speaking identity and progressing towards a *muda*:

> 'I love you, I love Guernsey'. 'Come on Guernsey FC!' 'That's a great goal' (Male, 40s)

[3] The study of Norman, of which Guernesiais is a branch, sheds light on the development of English and French.

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'What are you doing tonight?' 'What's for tea?' (Male, 60s)
'Would you like a drink?' (Male, 50s)
'Domestic everyday activities' (Male, 50s)
'Small talk' (Female, 20s)
'Exasperation with kids' (Male, 40s)
'Intimate language' (Female, 50s)
'Will you go out with me?' (this last is from teenagers interviewed in Sallabank's (2007) research)

Sallabank (2007) also found that native speakers associated Guernesiais with phatic language use and the emotions; this seems to be mirrored in the ways learners would like to use the language. It may also reflect a societal ideology that Guernesiais is most suitable for domestic, Low domains. The association of Guernesiais with expression of emotions is also illustrated by the success of a range of jewellery engraved with Guernesiais words and phrases.[5]

Several respondents expressed a desire to move beyond basic language and formulaic phrases, which may reflect an *ideal L2 self* in L2MSS terms, or desire for opportunities for a *muda*:

'More than "Comme tchi la faire va"' [*sic*][6] (Male, 40s)
'I'd like to be able to have a spontaneous conversation' (Female, 40s)
'I'd like to be able to have this level of conversation in Guernesiais' (Male, 40s)
'I'd like to be able to have a conversation and understand what comes back … get past hello and the weather … ' (Male, 50s)

As some pointed out however, unfortunately for them, this ideal L2 self is difficult to achieve due to the lack of resources available for Guernesiais promotion. There are very few lessons, none beyond lower-intermediate level, which can effectively halt the learning process. Some participants had taken a beginners' class several times.

As noted previously, for practical integrative purposes there is no cohesive language community to integrate into, unless new speakers build one for themselves. It is thus difficult for prospective new speakers of Guernesiais to garner enough interlocutors and proficiency to undertake a full *muda.* Nevertheless, there is an apparent widespread belief in an 'imagined community' (Anderson,

[4] Guernsey is not usually considered a nation despite political autonomy.
[5] www.patoisjewellery.com/patois-jewellery (last accessed 29.3.2020).
[6] The phrase 'Comme tchique l'affaire va' is a stereotyped phrase, analogous to 'How do you do', which is rarely used in natural conversation.

2006; Norton, 2009) of native speakers as target models, who were often cited as the most desirable models and interlocutors:

> 'More conversation sessions with native speakers, but helpful ones' (Male, 40s)
>
> 'I would love to just sit and listen and be completely immersed' (Male, 50s)
>
> 'To chat with my fluent Guernesiais-speaking elderly neighbour in our native tongue' (Male, 50s)

More realistic reactions came from learners who would like to be part of a (new) speaker community of practice:

> 'The lessons are great but they are artificial – you need venues' (Male, 40s)
>
> '[Lessons] backed up with other things like conversation' (Male, 50s)
>
> 'We need a support structure with mentors or a network of support' (Female, 30s)

But these aspirations are tempered by recognition that their everyday lives do not involve Guernesiais: 'It's important to speak with people at the same stage, but I can't meet every day' (Male, 40s). Several reported a lack of time to commit to language learning – which could conflict with the desire 'to just sit and listen and be completely immersed' and indicates that investment in language learning vies with other priorities.

As well as practical requests for more learning and self-study materials in order to be able to progress to more advanced levels, many respondents expressed a desire for opportunities to use Guernesiais outside lessons and to participate in social media in Guernesiais. There are efforts to respond to such requests, such as 'Speed Patois': short conversations in speed dating format, held in pubs, cafés and community halls about once a month. These sessions, plus others called 'Pure Patois' for more proficient speakers, bring together 'new' and 'traditional' speakers and have been well received. They also cater to the needs of another sector of the population common in language shift contexts: 'latent' speakers (Basham & Fathman, 2008) who heard Guernesiais when young, but for various reasons did not develop productive fluency. Several of this cohort, mainly aged fifty-five to seventy-five, are trying to re-activate their proficiency through lessons and conversation groups, largely for social enjoyment. Some report successfully attaining a *muda* through deliberate cultivation of opportunities for speaking Guernesiais.

Key goals for learning Guernesiais include a desire to (re)discover Guernsey culture and identity, but not necessarily in a backward-looking way, and sometimes in reaction against perceived global homogenization. For some

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participants, learning Guernesiais represents an almost anti-establishment stance, indicating a different type of affective interest in language:

'To rebel against the modern world' (Male, 40s)
'To be able to insult my clients' (Male, 40s)

This echoes Lanvers' (2016: 83) category of 'learners with "rebellious" orientation', 'resisting pressure from others', who in this case are motivated to learn their heritage language, rebelling against external pressures such as global homogenization, negative societal attitudes towards the heritage language, discourses about 'useful' languages and native speakers' assumptions that non-natives cannot learn Guernesiais.

Learners of Guernesiais have to navigate ideological tensions concerning authenticity (Sallabank & Marquis, 2018) and language prestige (Sallabank, 2013), as well as practical issues such as lack of opportunities to progress. In such circumstances, the degree of investment demonstrated by some in language learning is impressive.

17.3.2 Māori

The Māori language (*te reo Māori*) is the Indigenous language of Aotearoa, New Zealand (see also Chapter 8). The country was colonized in the early nineteenth century and a British-styled governmental structure was instituted from 1853. From 1860 onwards, the population comprised more English-speaking colonists than Māori, but it wasn't until the early to mid-twentieth century that sustained language shift towards English took hold (Benton, 1991). After rapid urbanization by the Māori population post World War II, there were few communities left by the mid-1970s where children were being raised as speakers of Māori (Benton, 1991). In 1981, when a conference of Māori elders became aware of this situation, they proposed the idea of Māori language immersion language nests (*kōhanga reo*) where children could be raised as speakers of Māori. The idea rapidly spread around the country (King, 2014). Since then, Māori immersion education, where the curriculum is delivered in the medium of Māori, has become available from preschool through to, and including, tertiary level. In addition, there are many Māori language radio stations and two Māori language television channels, as well as many government and tribal revitalization initiatives (see King, 2018 for an overview). Tribal revitalization initiatives particularly focus on increasing the use of the Māori language in the home, as per Fishman (1991).

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Currently Māori comprise 15 per cent of New Zealand's population of 4.9 million and the most recent census data shows that 21 per cent of Māori report conversational ability in the language; although companion studies indicate that relatively few people have a level of fluency in Māori (Lane, 2020). The intergenerational transmission rate of Māori is 43.6 per cent. This is the likelihood that a child who lives in a household with an adult speaker of Māori is also a Māori speaker (King & Cunningham, 2017). Increasing numbers of non-Māori are learning the language and they currently comprise 15.5 per cent of all speakers.

Because revitalization of the Māori language has been underway for nearly forty years and involves both Māori and non-Māori, we have several different cohorts of speakers. Lane (2020) and King (2014) both divide speakers of Māori ethnicity into cohorts which distinguish their different upbringings and experiences with regard to te reo Māori.

(1) The first cohort, born before 1958, largely grew up in rural environments where the Māori language was often a vernacular.

(2) Those born between 1959 and 1978 typically grew up in urban environments where they were generally not raised as speakers of Māori. This cohort has learnt the language as adults.

(3) The third cohort, born after 1979 and also largely raised in urban environments, are those who, even if they did not attend Māori immersion schooling themselves, do not remember a time when those options weren't available.

(4) The majority of non-Māori new speakers have learnt the language as adults.

All four cohorts have differing relationships and motivations with regard to becoming and being speakers of Māori. Table 17.1 shows the numbers and

Table 17.1 Cohorts reporting conversational ability in Māori at the 2013 census

cohort	description	number of speakers	% of total speakers of Māori
1	born in 1958 or earlier	23,997	16.2%
2	born 1959–1978	31,344	21.1%
3	born in 1979 or after	70,011	47.2%
4	non-Māori (all age groups)	23,043	15.5%
	Total	148,395	100%

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percentages of these four cohorts, drawn from the response to a question on conversational language ability in the 2013 census.

The first cohort, traditionally referred to as 'native speakers', has quite a different experience and relationship with the Māori language than the other three cohorts. In the National Māori Language survey in 1995, when asked whether they agreed with the statement 'you have to be able to speak Māori to be a real Māori', only 13 per cent of the 2,441 adult Māori respondents agreed (Te Puni Kōkiri, 1998). In King's (2007) research, while most respondents did not agree with this statement, those more likely to agree were older speakers who had grown up in Māori-speaking communities.

An analysis of Māori song lyrics relating to the Māori language from the first half of the twentieth century shows a preponderance of phrases exhorting younger generations to 'hold on' (*kia mau)* to the Māori language which has been passed down from the ancestors. The articulation of this sentiment indicates that during this timeframe there was an awareness that language shift was taking place. Describing the language as a possession in this way reifies the language, which is entirely appropriate for a cohort who do indeed 'possess' the language and have experienced intergenerational transmission (King, 2007: 72). In summary, the very oldest speakers of Māori, raised in a home and community Māori-language environment, feel that the language is part of them.

In contrast, the second cohort of Māori speakers, who have typically learnt the language as adults, did not 'have' the language, so they went looking for it. Between 2002 and 2007, King interviewed thirty-two Māori adults aged nineteen to forty-four about their upbringing and how they came to learn and speak te reo (King, 2007). King and Gully (2009) also surveyed 104 advanced Māori language learners, mainly aged between twenty and fifty, about their motivations for becoming proficient speakers. The majority of these participants were recruited from *kura reo*, Māori-language immersion camps for intermediate to advanced speakers (King, 2006). Responses included fifty-four from adults from the second cohort and twenty-eight from the third cohort. Participants were asked to list the three main reasons why they were committed to speaking the Māori language. Respondents gave a range of reasons:

- to teach my children their language (55 per cent of respondents had children)
- for the survival of te reo Māori
- for my own self identity

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- so I can understand when I go to *hui* (Māori gatherings)
- for the survival of my *hapū* and *iwi* (tribal groups)
- to double my job opportunities
- for my own wellbeing
- the language is beautiful – it's a treasure
- to teach other people (68 per cent were teachers).

While some of these responses could be categorized as instrumental ('to double my job opportunities') or integrative ('so I can understand when I go to *hui*') (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), these types of responses were in the minority.

The grounded theory analysis divided the responses into three categories according to whether the participant was expressing a sense of responsibility:

- towards themselves
- towards others (most often their own children, but also the wider community and ancestors)
- towards the language itself.

King and Gully (2009) referred to this approach as an 'Indigenous Language Acquisition' theory. In their analysis, the majority of respondents, regardless of age or sex, reported being most motivated by personal reasons, most often to do with their own sense of identity ('for my own self-identity' and 'for my own wellbeing'). Figure 17.1 shows the results for the second cohort of speakers (Māori born 1959–78). Note that each respondent could list up to three reasons for learning and speaking Māori.

While this pattern of responses held over most sub-groups of participants, there were two exceptions. Not surprisingly, those who lived with children were more highly motivated by responsibility towards others than those who didn't live with children; children were most cited in the 'others' category. One participant listed the names of her three children as her three main reasons for being committed to the Maori language. These motivations are confirmed by Chrisp (2005: 170) who quotes a participant saying that they wanted to learn and speak Māori 'because we are Māori, because our children are Māori'.

The thirty-four interviews conducted by King (2007) provide extra context with respect to this cohort of adult learners. This study used conceptual

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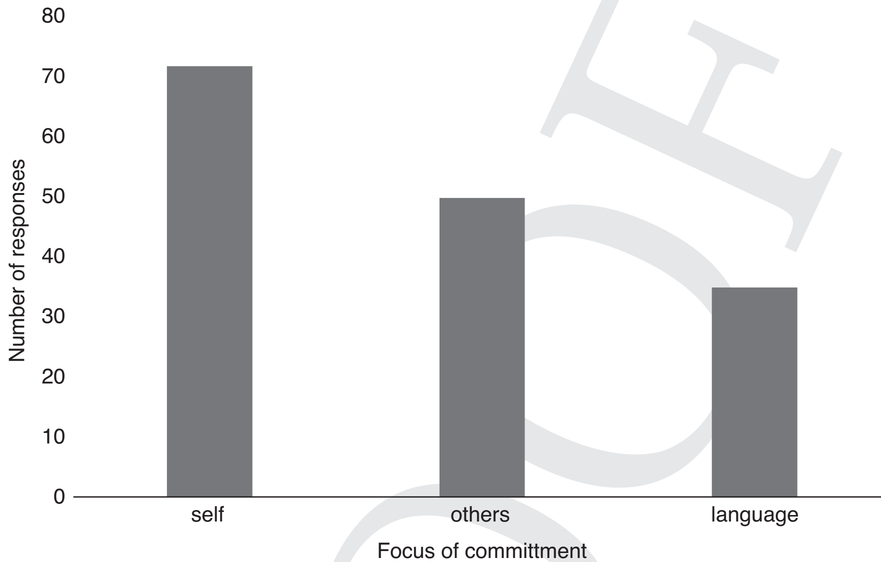
Figure 17.1 Responses from cohort 2 grouped according to focus of commitment to the Māori language (King & Gully 2009).



metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to analyze the descriptions participants use in describing how they became engaged with the Māori language as adults. Participants employed several metaphors to express:

- an initial state of being without the Māori language
- an engagement with the language
- a continuing relationship with the language.

Table 17.2 describes the four main metaphors and the mappings which allow all three of these states to be described.

Table 17.2 Metaphors used by newly fluent speakers to express their relationship with the Māori language

concept	metaphor	initial state	engagement	ongoing relationship
journey	language is a path	lost	get on path	follow path
	language is a canoe	lost	get on canoe	paddle
food	language is food	hungry	being fed	feeding others
growth	language learner is a plant	not growing	growing	blossoming

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It is the juncture between the initial state (being lost, hungry or not growing) and their engagement with the language (getting on the path/canoe, being fed or growing) which describes the *muda* that these participants have experienced. The following quotes show that for many participants this juncture was of considerable consequence.

- *I eke ahau ki runga i te waka, anō kua hoe ahau ki taku Māoritanga. Kātahi au i mārama, ko ēnei kē te mahi, taku mahi, taku hiahia.* (In the past, before I got on board the canoe, I was lost … I got on board the canoe, and paddled towards my Māori culture. Then it became clear to me that this was what I wanted to do, what I desired.)
- *Tino hiakai, tino matekai au te akona te reo.* (I'm really hungry, really ravenous to learn the language.)
- *Ka whai huarahi ahau kia puāwai tērā kākano i whakatōngia e tōku pāpā.* (I followed that path so that seed planted by my father could bloom.)
- *Āe, i whakatō i te kākano. I tahuna te ahi. Kei te kirikā tonu te ahi.* (Yes, the seed was planted. The fire was lit. The fire is still burning.)

These metaphors describe a relationship with the Māori language and demonstrate an eagerness to access a Māori worldview. As part of this life-changing juncture, a linguistic *muda*, many participants spoke of a strong spiritual awakening as they engaged with the Māori language:

- *Ko te reo he waka wairua.* (The language is a spiritual canoe.)
- *I ahau e kōrero Māori ana, ka hākoakoa rawa te ngākau … he mea ā-wairua pea.* (When I am speaking Māori my heart is extremely happy … maybe it's a spiritual thing.)

This spiritual aspect has also been commented on by Ratima and May (2011: 12), where Ratima, himself a member of cohort 2, describes spirituality as 'integral to learning te reo'. Similarly, Browne (2005) concluded that spiritual aspects were an essential part of learning the Māori language. In King (2007) participants also spoke about how engagement with the language gave them a link with their ancestors:

- *Nā rātou i whakatō i te wairua ki roto i ahau anō.* (It was they [the ancestors] who planted the spirit inside me [to learn the language].)
- *Koirā taku hiahia … me te whai i te huarahi o ōku mātua.* (And that's my desire … to follow the path of my parents.)

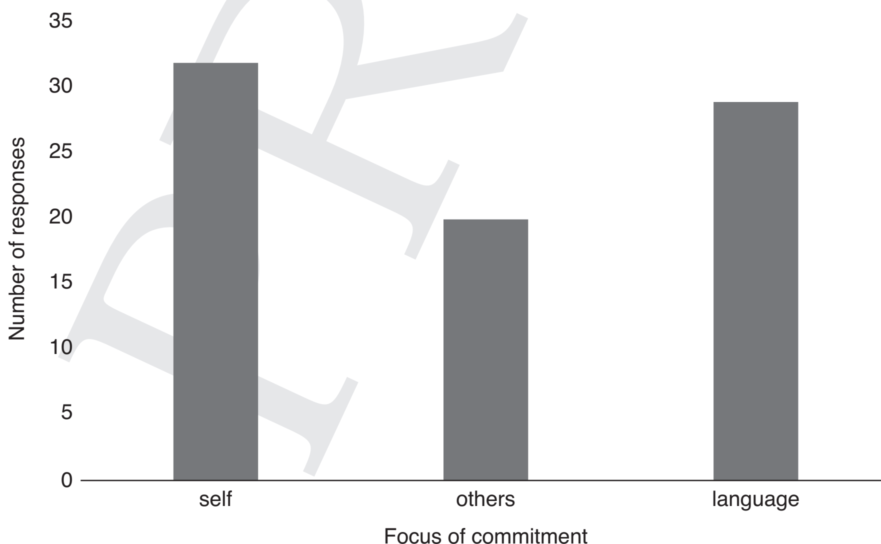
These results are supported by Te Huia (2015: 618), who found that 'the language provided participants with both a greater feeling of connectedness … and cultural awareness'. Her participants also described a linguistic *muda:* 'It was a whole opening, and the more the world opens to you, the more better you feel' (Te Huia, 2015: 618).

Turning to the third cohort of Māori speakers born from 1979, we find yet another set of experiences. This cohort have grown up in an environment where language revitalization measures in education and broadcasting have been well entrenched and the Māori language is an appreciable part of their surroundings. Figure 17.2 shows the results of the question about motivation for this cohort.

We can see that while self-identity is still the strongest motivator, a commitment to the language itself is a much stronger motivator than for those in cohort 2. Instead of a personal motivation accompanied by a linguistic *muda*, this cohort appear to be motivated by an awareness of their role in revitalizing the language (King, 2014).

The fourth cohort are non-Māori who are speakers of Māori. Their motivations and experiences have been examined by Nelson (2018). Her fourteen fluent speakers cited their primary motivation for learning the language as 'a deep calling – variously described as an innate desire or an inherent or

Figure 17.2 Responses from cohort 3 grouped according to focus of commitment to the Māori language (King & Gully 2009).



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spiritual pull' (Nelson, 2018: 15). In other words, many speakers in this cohort also experienced a linguistic *muda*. While the involvement of non-Māori as speakers of Māori has not always been welcome in the past, there are signs that this is changing. Indeed, the current government goal for the Māori language is to have one million speakers of basic Māori by the year 2040 (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2018). To achieve this goal many non-Māori need to acquire a level of fluency, an aspect which is supported by high levels of Māori support for the role of the language in wider society (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2018).

In summary, speakers of Māori who have made a sustained effort to learn the language as adults (cohorts 2 and 4) tend to be motivated by a desire to access a Māori cultural worldview, a rooted L2 self. They often describe undergoing a personal spiritual experience which is linked to an improvement in their wellbeing – a linguistic *muda*. Instead of seeing themselves as revitalizing the language, these cohorts feel that it is the Māori language which is revitalizing them (King, 2014).

17.4 DISCUSSION

These two case studies have identified salient themes and tropes which shed light on the experiences and aspirations of learners of two endangered languages from opposite sides of the globe. The findings echo established frameworks of motivation and identity in language learning in some respects, but challenge them in others.

Participants in the two case studies presented here do invest considerable effort in gaining fluency in small and minoritized languages. However, the 'profit' they gain is not generally monetary, nor to increase their cultural capital in ways valued by the majority community (in the way that Norton's (2013) participants sought to do). In these case studies, profit and cultural capital are derived from enhanced self-identity, reconnection with roots and cultural awareness. The linguistic *muda* is part of this goal of empowerment through reclaiming language.

Surprisingly, Norton (2013) devotes relatively little space to emotional investment in language learning, yet it emerges as increasingly salient in endangered language revitalization contexts. In agreement with Sallabank's findings on affective orientations to heritage language learning, Kim (2021) describes how in Jeju island, South Korea, speaking Jejuan is often considered more appropriate in a relaxed, trusting and intimate atmosphere where emotions may be expressed freely and where people feel more connected to their

emotional lives. Kim suggests that reflecting on the emotional relationships forged through language might be a benefit of language revitalization. This emotional relationship is reflected in Māori learners' feelings of a spiritual link to their language. As noted, it is linked to an improvement in participants' well-being, an indicator of a linguistic *muda*.

The jewellery mentioned in Section 17.3.1 is an example of Guernesiais being used in product marketing, and both Guernesiais and Māori are utilized in 'place branding', especially for 'local' products and tourism marketing. This is not without controversy and can raise questions about hyper-traditionalization and stereotyping (e.g. Olsen, 2008). In New Zealand, being able to speak te reo Māori can be profitable in the job market, as mentioned by some respondents; yet instrumental orientations to language were very much in the minority in our case studies. Minoritized languages usually have low value on a standard world linguistic market, but they may be more highly valued on niche markets where they can index a sense of community and solidarity (Sallabank & Kasstan, 2016).

With the four identified cohorts of speakers and an unprecedented level of government support, the Māori language is in a different situation to smaller endangered and Indigenous languages. Te reo Māori is co-official with English and New Zealand Sign Language and is increasingly recognized as an integral part of being a New Zealander; the official government website states 'whether you're a visitor to NZ or you live here, it's important to be aware of Māori customs and how to interact in Māori culture' (New Zealand Government, 2019). This wording echoes the slogan of the Guernsey Language Commission launched in 2013: 'Whether we are fluent or speak a few phrases, islanders of all ages are proud of Guernsey's own language', which also stressed 'awareness and recognition' as key aims (Sallabank, 2013: 161). Both Indigenous languages are thus increasingly part of the national/collective identity-building project, illustrated by Guernsey's recognition of its Indigenous language in August 2020; yet status planning is not overtly mentioned by the participants in our case studies, whose relationships with language seem more personal. Indeed, some Guernesiais learners experience language revitalization as mildly anti-establishment. This may indicate conflicting motivations and identifications: pride versus rebellion, perhaps reconciled in a *muda* through aspiration to join a new speaker community.

Norton (2013) places great importance on power relations in the learning of majority languages by members of minorities. As mentioned, this is less of a factor when learning languages which have lower value on the linguistic

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market. Yet learners of these languages do have to contend with entrenched ideologies of deficit in two respects:

(1) the subaltern status of the Indigenous ethnic group and its associated language

(2) power relations and perceptions of authenticity and legitimacy within the speaker community itself.

Although the former is not cited overtly by our participants, it is likely that countering the racism still experienced by Māori people is one reason for the focus on personal and cultural empowerment. Although there is less clear ethnic distinction between Guernesiais speakers and Anglophones, negative attitudes towards the language and its traditional speakers are still evident; the official discourses of pride, and the 'rebellious' orientations of some learners, may be intended to counter them. Our participants are highly aware of societal attitudes towards their target languages, and desire to challenge dominant discourses of deficit, and to strengthen heritage culture, is evident in both case studies.

In many situations of language endangerment, perceptions of authenticity and legitimacy, manifested through linguistic purism, can have a detrimental effect on language revitalization initiatives, as new speakers can become quite discouraged. Discourses of authenticity and legitimacy did emerge as salient in this research, but they have been discussed in detail elsewhere (Chrisp, 2005; Keegan et al., 2012; Sallabank, 2018; Sallabank & Marquis, 2018) and are the subject of increasing discussion in the literature (e.g. Dorian, 1994; Woolard, 2016; Gal, 2019).

Some of the reported motivations in this research can be mapped to the L2MSS framework. In terms of *ideal L2 self*, a degree of proficiency is clearly desired, as well as an affective relationship with Guernesiais or Māori as an identity marker – the *rooted L2 self* (Macintyre et al., 2017a) or a promotion-focussed orientation (Lanvers, 2017: 525). Learners also derive satisfaction and personal empowerment from language learning achievements, and from being part of a wider effort to revitalize their languages and to create a new speaker community, all part of a *muda*.

Compared to other endangered languages, Māori has a relatively large number of speakers. However, because speakers of Māori are also speakers of English, most learners find it difficult to establish Māori-speaking relationships with interlocutors (the same is true of Guernesiais). Advanced Māori speakers can attend regular *kura reo* which are total-immersion, live-in

language events run on *marae* (tribal meeting places). For speakers at beginner and intermediate levels it can be difficult to arrange regular interactions in urban settings, where 85 per cent of Māori live. Melrose reports on the benefits participants in a weekly one hour on-campus 'café reo' experienced, with one participant noting that 'it was good for me to be immersed with people who actually wanted to speak' (Melrose, 2016: 12). A number of tertiary Māori language programmes have set up similar informal spaces where learners who want to speak Māori can do so in a supportive environment where anxieties can be minimized. As noted in Section 17.3.1, Guernesiais learners wish for opportunities to become immersed; the Māori experience shows that this immersion can be with other new speakers rather than in an increasingly imaginary native-speaker setting.

Mendoza and Phung (2019) recommend that 'creating a supportive community offers an important way to encourage students to spend time and effort learning LOTEs [languages other than English]. More research should thus be channelled into how this can be accomplished' (Mendoza & Phung, 2019: 134). Especially for the large number of endangered languages around the globe, more research and new frameworks are needed to describe the complex relationships of new and traditional speakers with their linguistic repertoires. We propose that, while the frameworks of Gardner and Lambert (1972), Dörnyei (2009), Duchêne and Heller (2012) and Norton (2013) can be applied to an extent to larger minoritized languages such as Māori, they are not fully explanatory. We argue that the *muda*, a concept developed in minority-language 'new speaker' studies, as part of active harnessing of identity (or 'act of identity' in the terms of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985) for language reclamation, is a useful concept which illuminates the findings previously discussed. The Māori case study also illustrates the usefulness of studying metaphors used by new speakers to throw light on the experiences of a linguistic *muda*. Our new speakers of minoritized languages actively seek revitalization through language as an enrichment of their individual or group identity, rather than profit- or prestige-related orientations, or lofty yet vague aspirations to 'save the language'.

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